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THE CIVIC GOTHIC LEGACY:
PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS OF OTTAWA, LONDON AND BUDAPEST

Rosanne Dubé

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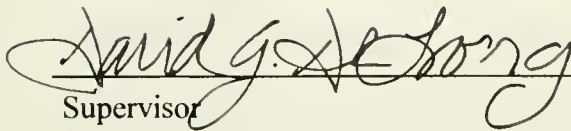
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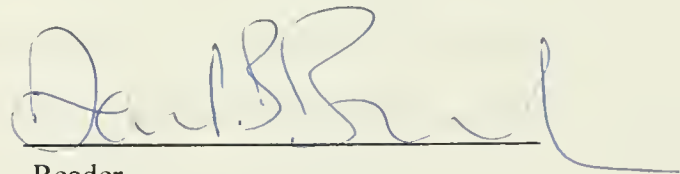
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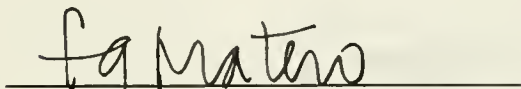
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INTRODUCTION

Parliament buildings fascinate us. They represent national seats of power and provide the setting for memorable political events. They are held as architectural accomplishments, and symbolize the aspirations of countries. They are also, and most importantly, buildings that must evolve with the countries they represent, and withstand the corroding effects of time and high usage. These buildings are the ideal subject for the study of large scale preservation work, as they embody some of the most difficult issues in preservation today, while high in the public's eye and under intense scrutiny.

The idea for this thesis topic was formed while working at the Long-Term Architectural Planning Office of the House of Commons in Ottawa, where a major parliamentary renovation plan was undertaken in 1996. It became evident that other very similar buildings, such as the Houses of Parliament in London and Budapest, were facing the same grand scale preservation issues. These three buildings were selected for the many characteristics they share. They were inspired by the Gothic Revival ideas emerging from Great Britain in the 1830s, and were designed through national competitions. All have had to accommodate growth, change and political pressures and find architectural solution to these problems. Research revealed that all three parliament buildings had followed approximately the same sequence of development, with alternating peaks of deterioration and repairs after their initial construction. Differences surfaced in the ways in which preservation responses were planned and carried out.

In this thesis, I examine and compare major architectural interventions undertaken in response to the difficulties of continuous adaptation, and demonstrate the changing views of preservation planning.

The first goal is to identify and define the influence of the Gothic Revival movement and design precedents in the architectural history of each of these parliament buildings, as well as in more recent preservation projects. This included the identification of Civic Gothic design precedents, architectural stylistic choices and issues of national symbolism.

The second goal is to analyze major changes in preservation responses since the buildings' construction to develop a critical view of current and future projects, and to identify changes in preservation structure. The building chronology of the Centre Block is used as a central theme, and parliaments in London and Budapest are drawn in as parallel examples.

Research was carried out through site visits through site visits during the Victorian Society Summer School Program. In addition, individual interviews and visits were conducted with architects and curators of the three parliament buildings under study. Written material, including primary and secondary sources provided the historical background. For reasons of confidentiality of information and security issues related to the subject matter, some documents were not available for consultation and interior photography was not always possible.

In Chapter 1, I examine the question of style and describe the terminology used. A short introduction to the history of each parliament building concludes the chapter.

In Chapter 2, I look at how the three parliament buildings came about through the development of the Gothic Revival movement. The issues of political activities, national symbolism and architectural representation are shown as intertwined. The Gothic Revival movement is discussed as it ties architectural style (the material) and the expression of values (the intangible).

In Chapter 3, I show the three parliament buildings as case studies of preservation perspectives, through the evaluation of past and recent interventions. Pressures are examined in order to understand the ideas and reasons behind the decisions and to analyze the consequences they generated. Other examples are also drawn in to exemplify specific interventions relating to the parliament buildings.

In the conclusion, I summarize the findings of the thesis outlining the key factors of influence in architectural interventions. Since preservation is defined as a change management framework, recommendations are made to guide future decision making on building interventions to ensure the legacy of our most valuable national monuments, the parliament buildings.

CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND

The Question of Style

In the case of parliament buildings, style is highly significant and consequential, from its selection to its interpretation, and to its ultimate preservation. For Shapiro, “style is, above all, a system of forms with a quality and a meaningful expression through which the personality of the artist and the broad outlook of a group are visible. It is also a vehicle of expression within the group, communicating and fixing certain values of religious, social, and moral life through the emotional suggestiveness of forms.” Furthermore, “works in the style of one time could not have originated in another.”¹ A similar idea is expressed by Hitchcock, who mentions that a “work of art can express satisfactorily only its own age and no other.”² This is one of the most important distinctions to be made about style: stylistic terms are limited to one era only, and cannot be applied to another. Therefore, a differentiation of terms is necessary to express the various examples of architecture introduced throughout this thesis, starting with the basic term of “Gothic.”

¹Meyer Schapiro, Theory and philosophy of art: style, artist, and society, (New York: George Braziller, 1994): 51-53.

²Henry-Russell Hitchcock, Early Victorian Architecture in Britain, Vol.1, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954): 18.

Gothic Architecture

The Gothic style is believed to have originated in France, with the work of the Abbé Suger for the construction of a new choir and façade for St-Denis Abbey in 1144.³ The pointed arch, the ribbed vault, and the flying buttress had been used before, but Gothic architects combined these elements, marrying them with stained glass in a quest for light. This emphasis on lightness and verticality distinguished Gothic architecture from Romanesque architecture of the time.⁴ The pointed arch alone is not sufficient to characterize Gothic architecture since it is common to both Gothic and Islamic architecture. The distinction lies in features of another order and, above all, at the “different ways of combining the elements in a search for a new effect or solution of a new problem.”⁵

Gothic architecture emerged as a distinctive style, becoming the style of choice for major cathedrals, such as Chartres (c.1204-24), Rheims (c.1230-60), and Westminster Abbey (completed 1272, remodeled c.1388). Although closely associated with religious architecture, some elements of the style, such as tracery and carving, were adapted in grand houses of medieval Europe.⁶

³The construction dates of St-Denis' choir varies between authors. Some use the year 1144 as the beginning of construction (Kostof 1985, 330; Aldrich 1999, 230). Others use 1140-1144 as the construction period (Mémo Larousse Encyclopédie 1991, 702; Halsall 1996, online at <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/sugar.html>).

⁴Spiro Kostof, A History of Architecture, (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985): 330-331.

⁵Meyer Shapiro, Theory and philosophy of art: style, artist, and society, (New York: George Braziller, 1994): 55.

⁶Megan Aldrich, Gothic Revival, (London: Phaidon Press Ltd, 1999): 31-33.

Terminology

Stylistic terminology differs greatly between authors, where the same term can be used to describe different building examples, or the same building example can be given different terms. For this thesis, *Gothic* is employed as a general term to refer to the characteristics of the Gothic style which emerged during the middle ages. *Perpendicular Gothic* refers to a particular Gothic interpretation in which the predominant feature is a grid of horizontal and vertical elements at right angle to each other.

The term *Gothic Revival* encompasses a number of variations and adaptations. *Civic Gothic* is used for examples of secular, public buildings of the Revival. *High Victorian Gothic Revival* reflects the evolution of the Revival through the use of wide-ranging medieval references in the middle of the nineteenth century. *Late Gothic Revival* refers to a variation with simplified forms which appeared at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century.

The term *Beaux-Arts Gothic* is used to describe the application of Beaux-Arts design principles with inspiration from medieval sources. Finally there is the term *Canadian Gothic*, which is used to reflect the use of the Gothic Revival as a national Canadian style through the construction of the parliament buildings and their influence on subsequent architecture aspiring to the national symbolism. It has been used by Canadian author R.H. Hubbard,⁷ and is also used to describe a quest for a new interpretation of the Gothic Revival and national symbolism.

⁷See R. H. Hubbard, "Canadian Gothic," *Architectural Review*, (August 1954): 103-108.

Although *Néo-Gothique* is the official French translation of *Gothic Revival*, *Neo-Gothic* as used in English bears a different connotation. In order to avoid confusion the term *Neo-Gothic* has not been used in this thesis.

Parliament Buildings History Summary

Ottawa

The Province of Canada, the precursor of Canada as we know it today, was formed by the union of Lower and Upper Canada through the Act of Union of 1841, which granted responsible government to the British colony. Parliament moved every four years or so between Kingston, Montréal, Québec City and Toronto. A permanent location was needed, and Queen Victoria selected Ottawa as the new capital of the Province in 1857. A competition was announced for the design of the first permanent parliament and two departmental buildings on a site known as Barrack Hill, near the river edge. The winning designs were called “Civil Gothic” at the time.⁸ We would now identify them as *High Victorian Gothic Revival*. Construction of the Centre, East and West Blocks began in 1859, and was completed in 1866.

⁸Department of Public Works, Annual Report 1859: 39.

With the British North America Act of 1867,⁹ the Provincial Parliament buildings became the seat of the new federal government: the Dominion of Canada.

In February 1916, a fire destroyed the Centre Block, save for the library. After many debates about the reconstruction, it was decided to demolish the ruins and build anew.¹⁰ The new building was completed in 1927. Through the years, the three buildings of Parliament Hill have had many modifications, additions and renovations. In 1996, a long-term program was set up to renovate the buildings, and will involve intensive restoration, renovation and new construction for the next twenty-five years.

London

The site occupied by the New Palace of Westminster is where Edward the Confessor established his residence in the first half of the eleventh century. His descendant, William Rufus, built Westminster Hall which still stands today after 900 years.¹¹ The Westminster building complex, including the Abbey and St Stephen's Chapel, endured many fires, reconstruction and additions throughout the centuries.¹² In October 1834, a fire destroyed much of the Houses, leaving only parts standing, including Westminster Hall.

⁹"Whereas the Provinces of Canada, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick have expressed their Desire to be federally united into One Dominion under the Crown of the United Kingdom." From: Department of Justice Canada, British North America Act of 1867, available online at <http://www.canada.justice.gc.ca/loireg/rapport/en/pl1-1.html>.

¹⁰John A. Pearson to the Hon. Robert Rogers, 29 July 1916, National Archives of Canada, RG11, V.2653, file 1595-25A.

¹¹House of Commons Factsheets - General Series No.11, available online at <http://www.parliament.uk/commons/lib/fs48.pdf>.

¹²Sir Robert Cooke. The palace of Westminster: Houses of Parliament, (London: Burton Skira, 1987): 15-17.

After an analysis of a damage report and numerous debates, it was decided to rebuild.¹³ A design competition was announced in 1835, and submissions were required to be in the “Gothic or Elizabethan” style, which was perceived to be the national style. Construction began in 1837 and the building was completed in 1870. The New Palace of Westminster proved to be an example of Gothic Revival used for secular and civic buildings.

The Palace survived almost unharmed from the First World War, but the House Chamber was destroyed during the Second World War. The Chamber was reconstructed according to its previous proportions, but in a re-interpretation of the Gothic Revival with simplified detailing and ornamentation. Through the years, restoration work has taken place, including masonry repairs, re-roofing, as well as changes to the interiors. In the 1990s, a long-term plan was instituted to ensure the preservation and functionality of the buildings and to provide much-needed new facilities.

Budapest

In the ninth century, Magyars tribes settled in the Carpathian Basin. By 1000, King Stephen I had replaced the ancient tribal structure with the newly founded Hungarian State, and converted his people to Christianity. The first assembly sessions, the Diet, were held in the 15th century, and an Act in 1608 codified bicameral sessions. The venues of assembly changed as political conditions shifted.¹⁴

¹³Michael Harry Port, ed., The Houses of Parliament, (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1976): 76-9.

¹⁴László Csorba. and József Sisa, Le Parlement Hongrois, (Budapest: Katalin Asbóth-Alvinczy, 1994): 7-17.

The first proposal for a parliament building was made at the Diet in 1830. In 1873, Pest, Buda and Obuda were unified and Budapest became the capital. Finally in 1880, an Act of Parliament enabled the construction of a new, permanent House.¹⁵

A design competition was announced in April 1882, with a designated site on the Pest side, along the Danube River. The winning design was representative of the Late Gothic Revival mode. Construction began in 1885, and continued until 1902.

During the Second World War, the building was heavily damaged and the dome collapsed.¹⁶ Many repairs took place and the dome was re-erected. The communist regime, which was implemented in 1953, ended with the free elections of 1989. A masonry restoration program was established in the 1970s to replace the soft, deteriorated limestone with a harder, more resilient type. Other renovations, upgrades and reconstruction have taken place since then. Recently, restoration work was performed on interiors and furniture. Planning for further preservation work is currently underway.

¹⁵Dániel Szabó, "The Hungarian parliament of the 19th century," chapter in Budapest Museum of Fine Arts, The House of the Nation: Parliament Plans for Buda-Pest 1784-1884, (Budapest: Budapest Museum of Fine Arts, 2000): 281-288.

¹⁶József Sisa, Bence Tihanyi and Agnes Bakos, The Parliament House of Hungary, (Budapest: Magyar Könyvklub, 2001): 32.

CHAPTER 2

THE GOTHIC REVIVAL AND THE PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

The Gothic Revival is a defining element of the buildings under study: it expresses ties with the medieval past, and conveys strength and stability. Furthermore, as Gothic architecture represented both material and intangible qualities, merging architecture and spirituality, new values were introduced in the Revival of the style.

Each of these countries wanted to build in their national style of architecture. They chose the Gothic as the most representative of their nation, and adapted it to suit their own purpose. Not only were they seeking their own expression, they also wanted to distance themselves from other institutions, thus they adopted a style distinct from the ones selected by others. The issues of state representation, national style, and symbolism become intertwined in the development of the parliament buildings.

Emergence of the Gothic Revival

In Britain, the second quarter of the nineteenth century was a transitional period, as changes occurred which influenced the following decades. One of those changes came from architectural theory and practice, as new ideas were introduced. Sir John Soane had been one of the most influential architect in Britain at the beginning of the century, and had produced remarkable architecture using a Classical vocabulary.

However, by the time of his death in 1837, young architects like Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin (1812-1852) were advocating a different approach to architecture, by looking at a different source of inspiration: the Gothic of medieval England. What Pugin brought to architecture was a rigorous approach in the use of medieval elements, by an accurate use and understanding of historical precedents. Furthermore, he infused a moral and religious connotation to his work, which other architects had not done in their use of medieval elements. Pugin, who converted to Catholicism in 1835, believed the association of Gothic and Catholicism embodied true building form. He demonstrated his convictions through his two rules of design: “1st, that there should be no features about a building which are not necessary for convenience, construction, or propriety; 2nd, that all ornament should consist of enrichment of the essential construction of the building.”¹⁷ Pugin was able to put his principles into built form, with his masterpiece at St. Giles church in Cheadle (1841-46).

Although Pugin’s contribution to the Gothic Revival was probably the most important, other factors contributed to the rise of the movement. In a rapidly changing world, the Gothic buildings of England provided the nation with a sense of continuity with the past. At the time, most British people believed that the Gothic style had originated in England, which provided arguments for a “national style” of architecture. Gothic was linked to Catholicism, but elements were also used in medieval and eighteenth century domestic architecture.

¹⁷Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin.. The True Principles of Christian or Pointed Architecture, (London 1841, reprint; London: H. G. Bohn. 1853); 1.

Early Gothic Revival: London

The acceptance of the Gothic Revival for secular buildings became manifest when a design competition was announced on 3 June 1835 for the new Palace of Westminster, to replace the earlier building destroyed by a fire in 1834. The competition requested that designs submitted be in the national style, which was deemed to be “Gothic or Elizabethan.”¹⁸ England had many Gothic buildings remaining from the Middle Ages and author Benjamin Disraeli believed that harking back to medieval England would bring about many moral virtues, as well as a sense of national identity.¹⁹

The style requirements were freely interpreted by the architects. The winning design was executed by Sir Charles Barry (1795-1860) and Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin (1812-1852), who used references to the Perpendicular Gothic in a symmetrical composition, only disturbed by the irregularly placed towers, reflecting Pugin’s more picturesque approach.²⁰ Barry had a well-established practice, and was known for his use of Italian Renaissance references, as demonstrated in his Travelers’ Club of 1829.²¹ He hired Pugin, who was beginning his career as a great writer and champion of the Gothic Revival, to complete the details and the renderings for the competition entry, as they had collaborated earlier on the interiors of Birmingham Grammar School (1835).

¹⁸David Cannadine, “The Palace of Westminster as Palace of Varieties,” in The Houses of Parliament: history, art and architecture, eds. Christine Riding and Jacqueline Riding, (London: Merrell, 2000): 15.

¹⁹Stefan Muthesis, “Parliamentarianism, Giganticism, Style and Criticism,” in The House of the Nation: Parliament Plans for Buda-Pest 1784-1884, (Budapest: Budapest Museum of Fine Arts, 2000): 293.

²⁰Henry-Russell Hitchcock, Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, 4th ed., (New York: Penguin Books, 1977): 150.

²¹Sir Robert Cooke, The palace of Westminster: Houses of Parliament, (London: Burton Skira, 1987): 75.

One major strength of the proposal was the use and integration of the remaining Gothic structures on the site, including Westminster Hall, which had survived the fire. This provided continuity with the former Palace and served to reinforce Britain's image of stability. Harmonizing with the remaining medieval buildings on the site was perceived as one of the most important characteristic of the new building. However, Pugin, who believed that architecture must derive its character from the expression of structure, was not entirely pleased with the entry. He remarked about the design: "All Grecian, Sir: Tudor details on a classic body."²² The building was, in fact, symmetrical, orderly, and well divided along a cross-axial plan (as shown in Figures 1 and 2).



Fig. 1. The Palace of Westminster After Completion. From M. H. Port, ed. The Houses of Parliament, (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1976): 23.

²²A.W.N. Pugin, cited in Roger Dixon and Stefan Muthesius, Victorian Architecture, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978): 156.

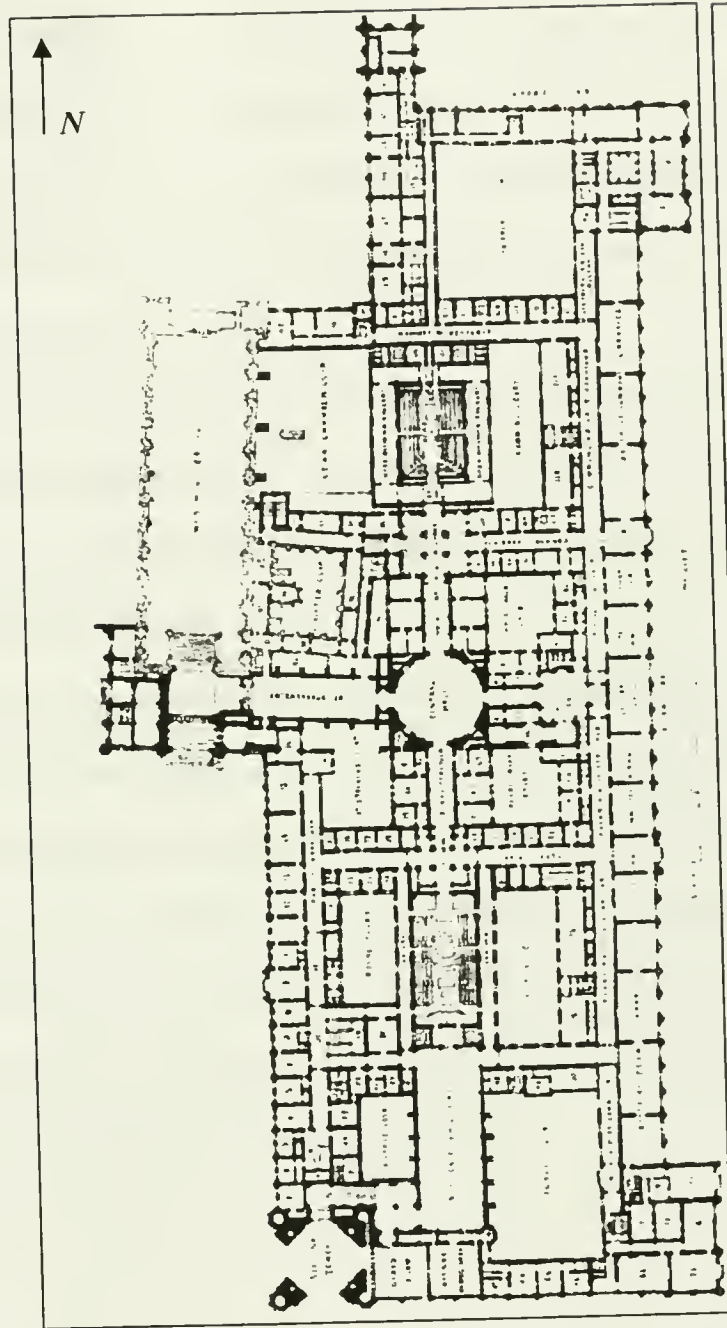


Fig. 2. Revised Floor Plan for Westminster, 1843. From M. H. Port, ed. *The Houses of Parliament*, (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1976): 107.

What rendered the building in the Gothic Revival, apart from the use of the pointed arch, ribbed vaulting, elevations in the Perpendicular mode, and asymmetrical towers, were the medieval detailing, stone carving, and the interior decoration recounting events of Britain's history and the values honored by the country, to form a "display of national history and national historicism."²³

Construction began in 1837, the same year Queen Victoria ascended to the throne. The Queen displayed her fascination with the medieval past at the Bal Costumé of May 1842, where England's romantic medieval image provided a sense of a secure, appealing past, reinforcing references to the Gothic period.

Through thirty years of construction, the Palace received numerous design modifications. The building was finally completed in 1870, after the death of both architects. The construction of Westminster not only provided an example of Civic Gothic, which influenced the construction of numerous civic building in Britain and outside its borders, but also provided a reference point from which architects could develop new ideas. Derivatives of Westminster include Ottawa and more particularly Budapest.²⁴ These will be discussed in the following sections.

²³David Cannadine. "The Palace of Westminster as Palace of Varieties," in The Houses of Parliament: history, art and architecture, eds. Christine Riding and Jacqueline Riding, (London: Merrell, 2000): 15.

²⁴Sir Robert Cooke. The palace of Westminster: Houses of Parliament. (London: Burton Skira, 1987): 383.

High Victorian Gothic Revival: Ottawa

By the late 1840s, a reinterpretation of the Gothic Revival led to a High Victorian Gothic eclecticism, which allowed much wider scope by admitting French, German and Italian influences. Architects of the period, such as George Gilbert Scott (1811-1878), believed that a “vast range of historical precedent could be tapped by the nineteenth-century architect, and that the confluence of these diverse forces would produce a new architectural vocabulary.”²⁵ In 1857, Scott advocated the use of the Gothic Revival for public building in his Remarks on Secular and Domestic Architecture, and so did George Edmund Street (1824-1881), who had worked in Scott’s office in the 1840s.²⁶ The Gothic Revival developed into a much more original mode, very remote from the models which Pugin had recommended as providing proper precedents for the Revival.²⁷

British author John Ruskin (1819-1900) brought new ideas to the Gothic Revival by stressing the expression of nature in construction, emphasizing the role of the artisan, and praising the Gothic building of Italy. Ruskin’s Seven Lamps of Architecture (1849) and Stones of Venice (1851) proved immensely influential on architects of his time, such as Benjamin Woodward. Woodward displayed his understanding and interpretation of the Gothic Revival in his design for the Oxford University Museum (1855-1859), as shown in Figure 3.

²⁵David Bruce Brownlee, “The First High Victorians: British Architectural Theory in the 1840s,” Architectura 15 (1985): 33.

²⁶David Bruce Brownlee, The Law Courts: the architecture of George Edmund Street, (New York: Architectural History Foundation; Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1984): 26.

²⁷Henry-Russell Hitchcock, Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, 4th ed., (New York: Penguin Books, 1977): 148-149.

Heavily influenced by the Italian Gothic references praised by Ruskin, the design differed greatly from Westminster. Gone were the delicate tracery of the windows, the monochromatic stone treatment and the large windows formed by the Perpendicular treatment of the elevations. The museum is a more robust interpretation of the Gothic, with punched openings in the deep masonry walls, accentuated by carvings recalling natural forms. Structural polychromy is seen in the alternating stone colors in the arches and the small columns around the windows.

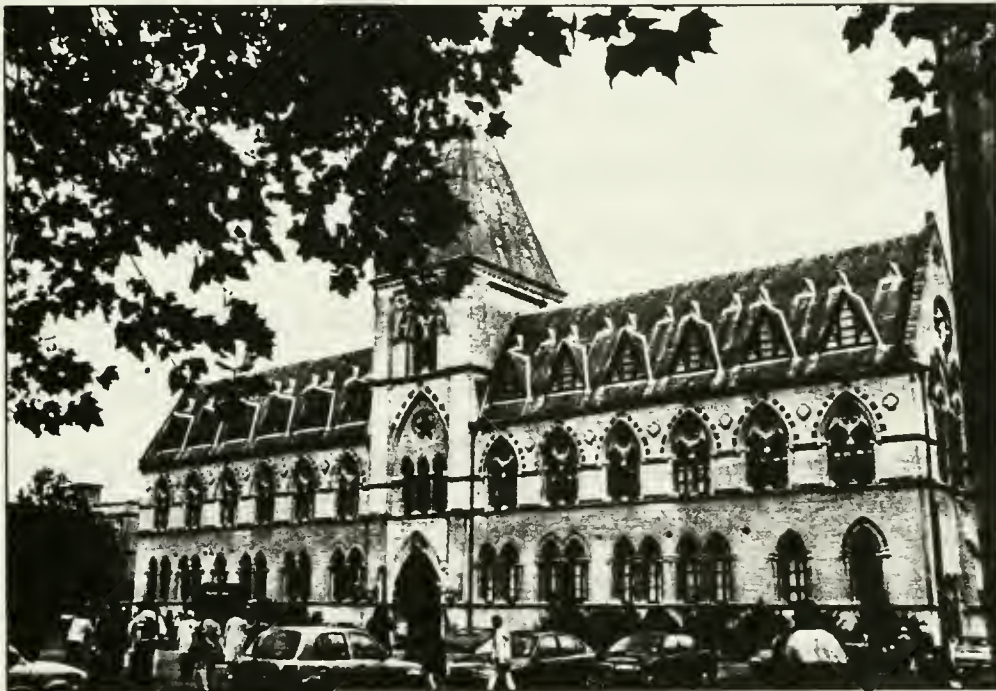


Fig. 3. Oxford University Museum. Photograph by the author, July 2001.

These new architectural ideas reached an unprecedented audience through publications that became widely available: the *Illustrated London News* and the *Builder* were both launched in 1842, soon followed by the *Building News* in 1854.²⁸

²⁸Robert Thorne, "Inventing a New Design Technology," in *The Victorian Vision: Inventing New Britain*, ed. John M. MacKensie, (London: V&A Publications, 2001): 177.

The buildings of the Gothic Revivalists in England provided precedents available to architects throughout the world. These influences were strongly felt in Canadian architecture in the middle of the nineteenth century, as Canada was consolidating into one nation and yearned for a permanent parliament in its new capital.

In May 1859, a design competition for the Parliament and Department Buildings was announced. The Department Buildings were to flank the Parliament, which was to hold the most prominent position on the plateau, the result is shown in Figure 4. Fourteen entries were received, “ten of which were either of the Classic or Italian styles, and six of the Norman and Gothic.” Both winning entries were identified as “Civil Gothic.”²⁹

The competition for the Parliament building was won by the firm Fuller & Jones of Toronto. The partners were Thomas Fuller (1822-1898), an architect from Bath, England, recently arrived in Toronto in 1856, and Chilion Jones (1835-1912), a civil engineer from Upper Canada (now Ontario). Fuller went on to win the competition for the Capitol Building at Albany, New York, from which he was later dismissed. In 1881, he became Chief Architect of Canada, a position he held until 1896.

The winners of the competition for the Public Department Buildings were Thomas Stent (1822-1912) and Augustus Laver (1834-1898), both recent immigrants who had trained and practiced in England, and moved to Ottawa in 1858. They also submitted a Gothic Revival design entry in the 1862 competition for the Houses of Parliament in Sydney, Australia,³⁰ one of the many civic building commissioned during the period.

²⁹Department of Public Works, Annual Report, 1859. (Québec: Thompson and Co., printers, 1860): 39.

³⁰Walter E. Langsam, “Thomas Fuller and Augustus Laver Victorian Neo-Baroque and Second Empire vs. Gothic Revival in North America,” Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians 29 (October 1970): 270.

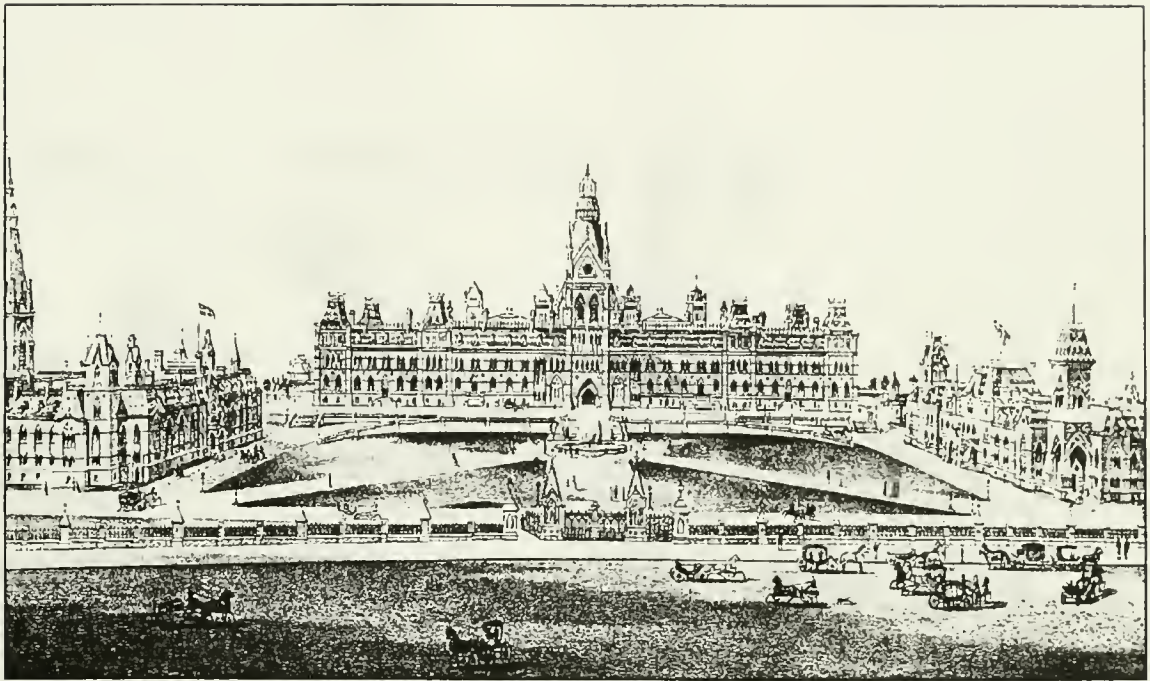


Fig. 4. The Centre Block, Flanked by the West and East Block, c.1870. Lithograph by J.W. Winham and W.R. Berry. (NA, C-947)

The Parliament Building was later called “Centre Block,” and the two Departmental Buildings received the names of “East and West Blocks.” Parliamentary activities were to be held in the Centre Block, while ministries would occupy the East and West Block. Construction of the building triad took place between 1859 and 1866. Completion of the parliament buildings occurred at the same time that George Edmund Street won the competition for the Law Courts, which was the climax of the High Victorian movement but also its finale.³¹ The buildings exemplify the ideas of the High Victorian Gothic Revival by the use of various historical precedents and forming a new vocabulary. Front and back views of the Centre Block are shown in Figures 5 and 6.

³¹David Bruce Brownlee, The Law Courts: the architecture of George Edmund Street. (New York: Architectural History Foundation; Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1984): 17.

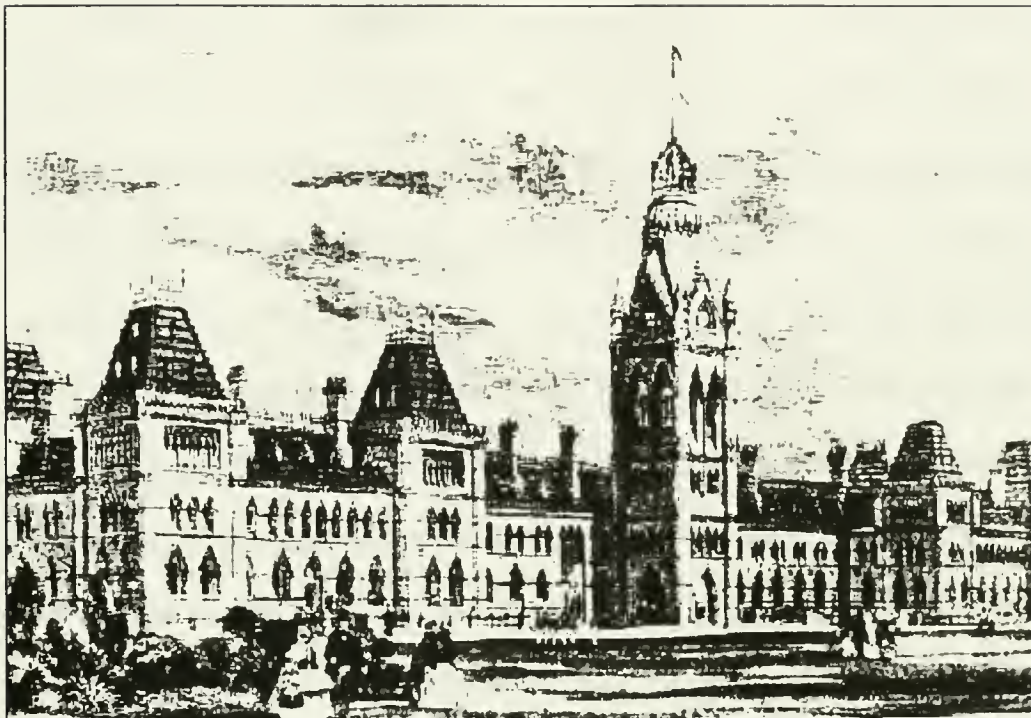


Fig. 5. Fuller & Jones' Winning Design for the Centre Block, Front View. Published in Building News, 25 November 1859. (Metropolitan Toronto Library Board)

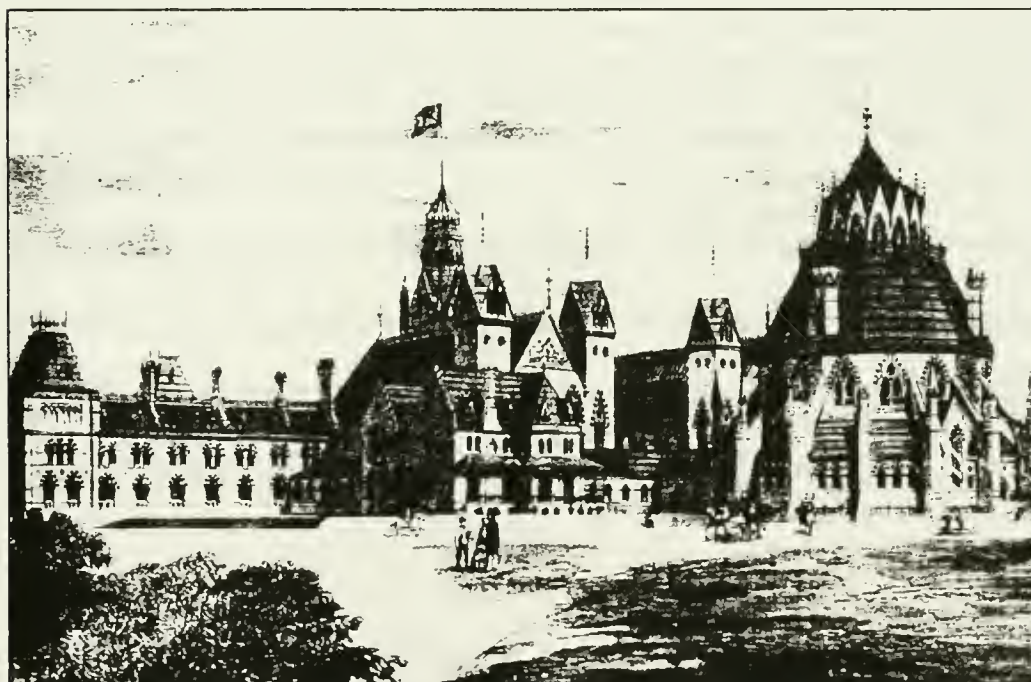


Fig. 6. Fuller & Jones' Winning Design for the Centre Block, Rear View. Published in the Builder, 10 December 1859. (Metropolitan Toronto Library Board)

Features of the Oxford University Museum can be seen in the Centre Block, such as the polychromy in the stone work and in the slate roof, as well as the window openings set deep into the stone walls with arches articulated by red stones. Here, the differences lie in the rugged treatment of the local Nepean sandstone, the strong presence of the central tower with elaborate pinnacles rising from the low elevation, and the mansard roofs crowned by delicate cresting. The general effect is one of intricate details over a strong mass and elongated profile, with rounded corners and the absence of sharp edges. The picturesque qualities are seen in the rear elevation, by the play of building volumes and the circular shape of the library.

The architects of the Centre Block, Fuller & Jones, explained their choice of the Gothic Revival in their submission, praising its adaptability and picturesque qualities:

The architects consider that a building appropriated to the use of the Parliament should present in its exterior, a dignified, elegant, and also cheerful appearance, and that its character should tend more to the Palatial than the Castellated, have, after mature deliberation adopted the Gothic as the style most adapted to attain this end, and when properly treated, they believe it more capable of meeting every modern requirements than any other style, besides being much more imposing and picturesque, and less costly.³²

Their design displayed a great influence from the work of Alfred Waterhouse. They borrowed ideas from Waterhouse's design for the Manchester Assize Courts and also incorporated extracts of his submission into their own entry for the Ottawa competition.³³ None of the architects made any references to Canadian architecture..

³²Royal Commission on Public Buildings at Ottawa, Report of the Commission appointed to inquire into matters connected with the public buildings at Ottawa, (Quebec: J. Blackburn, 1863): 188.

³³Ibid. and Colin Cunningham and Prudence Waterhouse, Alfred Waterhouse 1830-1905: Biography of a practice, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992): 35.

This is not surprising since Canada at the time did not have many buildings of the Gothic Revival. In addition, Fuller, Stent and Laver were all British-born architects, which further explains their use of British precedents in their designs.

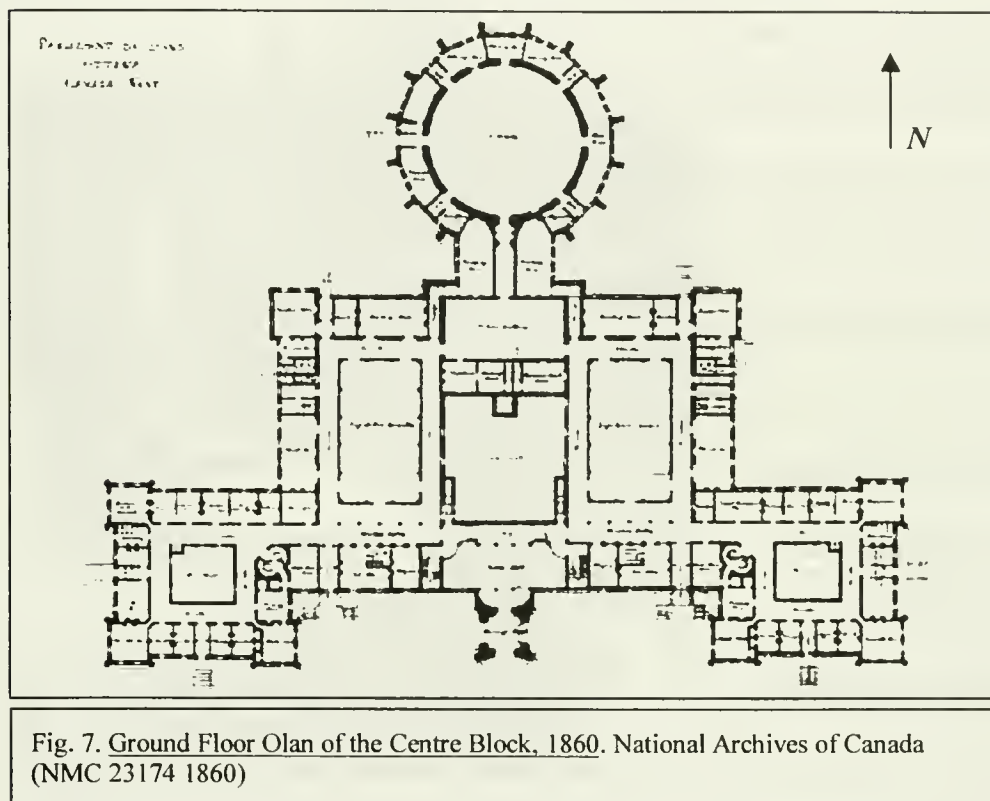


Fig. 7. Ground Floor Plan of the Centre Block, 1860. National Archives of Canada (NMC 23174 1860)

The plan seen in Figure 7 shows a symmetrical arrangement along a central axis. The Chambers are located on each side and the library is pushed back, removed from the volume of the building. The East-West corridor provides the only strong axis, serving as a spine for the arrangement of the spaces, interconnected with secondary corridors.

The design was selected because of its appropriateness to the site and ties with Britain, but also influential was the desire to stand away from the neoclassical forms used for the United States Capitol Building, and the Gothic Revival was the ideal choice to enhance the distinction. For the young Province of Canada, the first permanent parliament buildings represented stability and establishment in the new capital.



Fig. 8. View of Parliament Buildings from Major's Hill.
G.M. Grant Picturesque Canada, vol.1 (1882)

The ruggedness of the stone treatment was representative of the capital and the country: a backwater lumber town on the edge of the wilderness.

Ruskin's ideas on the picturesque qualities of the Gothic Revival are visible in the natural forms carved into interior columns capitals and the picturesque relationship between the parliament buildings and their site: a striking cliff on the river edge, as shown in Figure 8. The strength of the design resides in

the placement of the three buildings and their relationship with the site, which can be seen in Figures 4 and 8. Together, they form "a major monumental group unrivalled for extent and complexity of organization in England," by "the variety of form, the gusto of the detail, and the urbanistic scale of this project."³⁴ The result of the grouping of the buildings is a product greater than the sum of its parts.

³⁴Henry-Russell Hitchcock, *Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, 4th ed. (New York: Penguin Books, 1982): 277.

Each building benefits from the presence of the others to generate a sense of monumentality. Taken on their own, each building could pass for a handsome town hall of a quaint English town. At the time of completion, it was said that they produced “a combined effect of grandeur and harmony which, it is believed, cannot be surpassed by any other Public Buildings upon this Continent.”³⁵ The merging of architecture and landscape on Parliament Hill forms an integrated composition: the river side view is one of the most recognized Canadian symbols and was featured prominently on the back of the Canadian one dollar bill from 1969 to 1979. The buildings of parliament are featured on the front of the five and ten dollar bills since 1986.

Although the Gothic Revival of the parliament buildings in Ottawa did not have the same result as the Capitol Building had in the United States, where the architectural features were repeated throughout the country, it did however provide references for Canadian architecture. Whereas in London and Budapest, where the countries’ rich history could be represented in the design their parliament buildings, in Canada, the nation was just beginning, and had yet to establish its own history. Therefore, the parliament was not a reflection of an existing Canadian history and identity, but itself a cornerstone in the construction of that identity.

³⁵Department of Public Works, Annual Report 1863. (Ottawa: King’s Printer , 1864): 54.

Late Gothic Revival: Budapest

After the Parliament in Ottawa was completed in 1866, other designs pursued the idea of the Gothic Revival in different directions. Important projects ideas reached continental Europe, such as the London Law Courts (1868-1882) by George Edmund Street (1824-1881). E. M. Barry's design entry for the same competition, shown in Figure 9, proved influential. The general massing, articulation of the facade and use of a central dome were repeated in the Hungarian parliament.

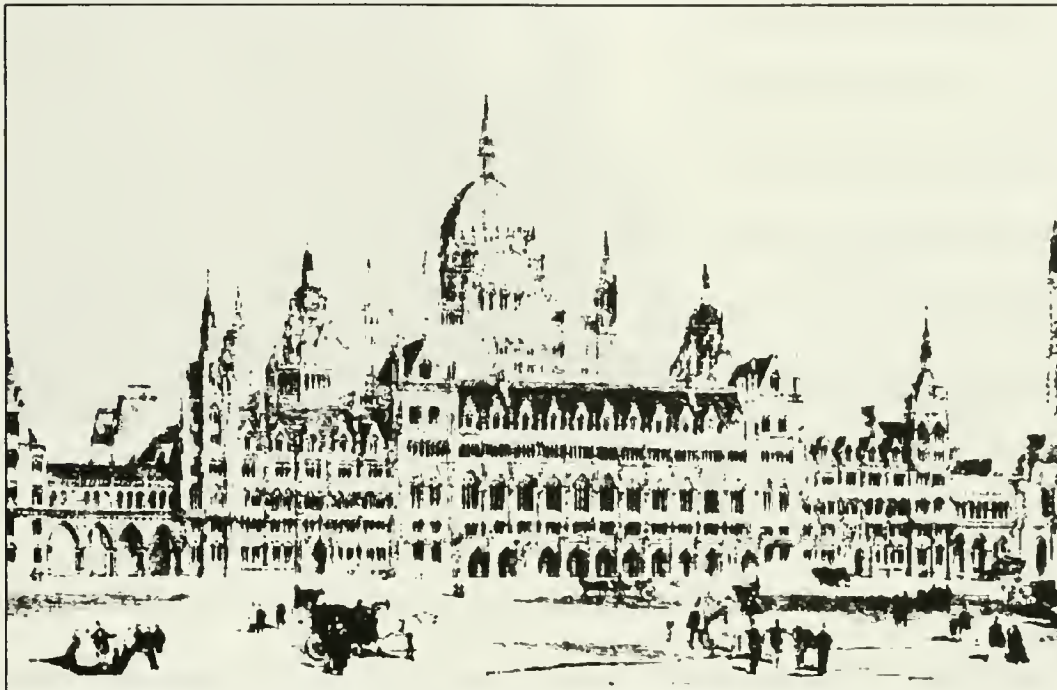


Fig. 9. E.M. Barry Entry for the 1867 Law Courts Competition. From M.H. Port, ed., The Houses of Parliament, (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1976): 304.

Projects in Europe also provided influences, such as the Vienna City Hall (1872-1883) by Friedrich Schmidt (1825-1891), shown in Figure 10. The City Hall displays some of the characteristics of the Ottawa parliament, such as the strong central tower and the mansard roofs with cresting, but with a more compact, urban plan and with a more monochromatic scheme and slender proportions of the columns at the windows.



Fig. 10. Vienna City Hall (1872-1883). Photograph by the author, July 2001.

These projects proved to be significant in the design of civic building, particularly in the design of the parliament in Budapest. For Hungarians, the construction of the Parliament Building was more than just an architectural problem: the building had to embody the national independence, or at least the national grandeur, that Hungary had craved for centuries. In 1880, an Act of Parliament authorized the construction of the parliament building. A design competition was announced in

April 1882, with a site on the Pest side along the Danube River. Entrants could design in any architectural style, except “Classical Greek.” This was the style of the Parliament House in Vienna, Budapest’s great rival from which it desperately wanted to distinguish itself.³⁶ Whereas most of the nineteen entries received in February 1883 made use of the Classical vocabulary, the selected scheme was the only one in the Gothic Revival.³⁷

³⁶József Sisa, Bence Tihanyi and Agnes Bakos, The Parliament House of Hungary, (Budapest: Magyar Könyvklub, 2001): 10-11.

³⁷László Csorba and József Sisa, Le Parlement Hongrois, (Budapest: Katalin Asbóth-Alvinczy, 1994): 30.

The competition winner was Imre Steindl (1839-1902), a Hungarian-born architect who had studied in Vienna under Friedrich Schmidt (1825-1891). Steindl had designed a number of large Neo-Renaissance buildings in Budapest, including the Technical University where he became a professor of medieval architecture in 1870. His drawings for the parliament are shown in Figure 11. The plan is strongly axial, and its siting is in keeping with the urban fabric, but in an unprecedented grand scale: Hungary's repressed aspirations were unleashed into a palatial structure. The strong verticality in the towers and the dome can be seen as a metaphor for Hungary's quest for recognition.

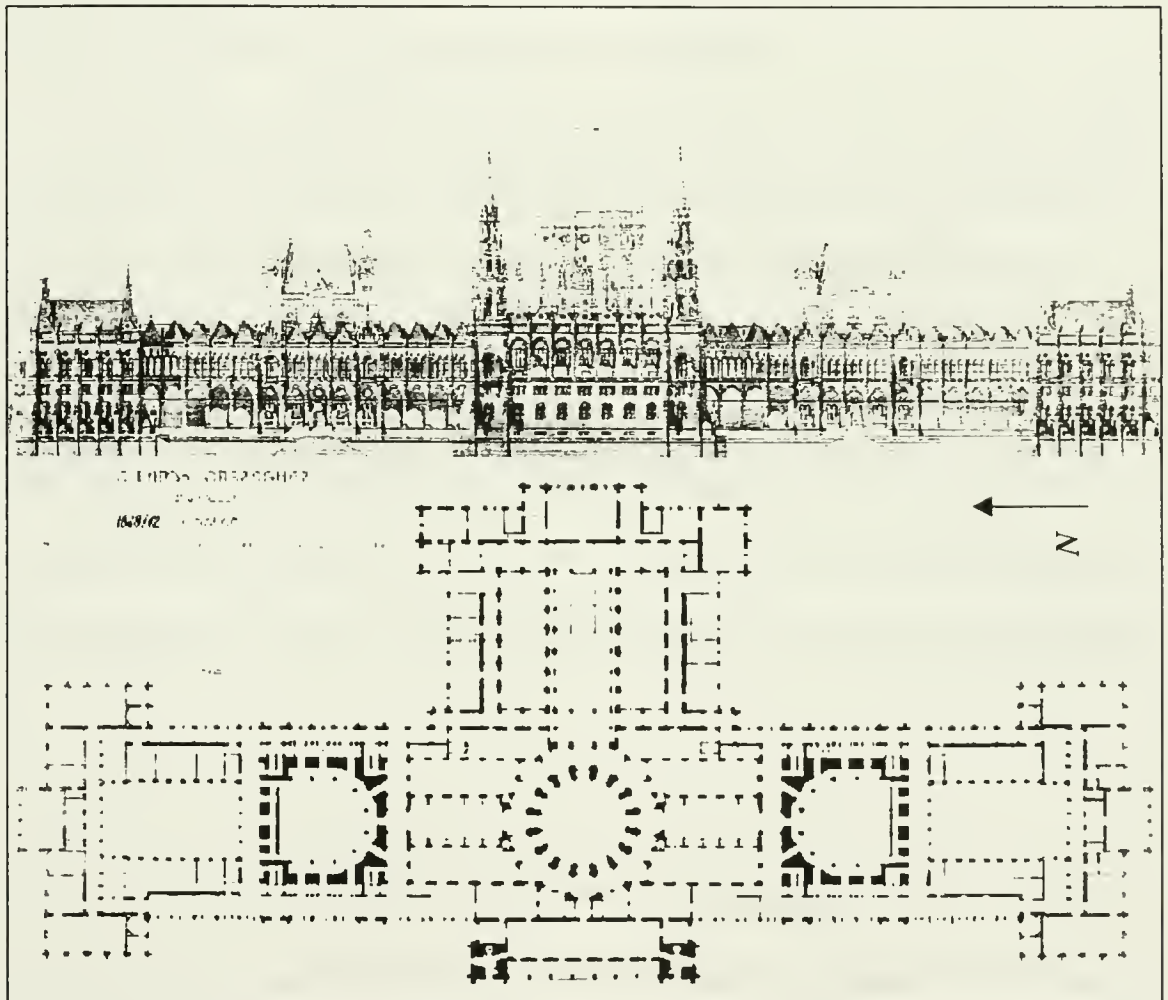


Fig. 11. Riverside Elevation and First Floor Plan, Hungarian parliament, 1888. From. Budapest Museum of Fine Arts, The House of the Nation, (Budapest: Budapest Museum of Fine Arts, 2000): 260

Debates raged about the definition of a national style for the House of the Nation. Steindl himself said that traces of Hungary's national character did not exist anywhere in their stone architecture. What he strove to achieve was the introduction of a national and individual spirit into the "Gothic medieval style," for which he designed the surface ornamentation in the spirit of Gothic in a more or less stylized manner.³⁸ A parliamentary committee agreed with his submission. Members stated that "if we have no national style, it (Gothic) can be chosen to express the most magnificent idea of freedom and state power," to which a bishop added "we need to turn to the application of great epochal art forms (...) Gothic is the most excellent monumental style."³⁹

In opposition, comments were made that Gothic architecture was not national style, claiming that "the Gothic style is entirely alien to Hungarians," and rather "German in character."⁴⁰ Nonetheless, Steindl was convinced that the Gothic was best suited to express Hungary's national character. No doubt he was referring back to Hungary's architectural past and religious character. The country was, after all, a Catholic state, and the connection between Catholicism and Gothic architecture was made by the Abbé Suger and was reiterated by Pugin in the 1830s. Hungary still retains Gothic buildings, and examples can be seen in Budapest, such as Matthias Church and the Castle of Buda.

³⁸Imre Steindl, cited in Béla Neß De Pilis, Le palais du Parlement hongrois (Budapest: Charles Divald, n.d.): 8.

³⁹József Sisa, Bence Tihanyi and Agnes Bakos, The Parliament House of Hungary, (Budapest: Magyar Könyvklub, 2001): 13-16.

⁴⁰Lorinc Mara Jr., cited in József Sisa, Bence Tihanyi and Agnes Bakos, The Parliament House of Hungary, (Budapest: Magyar Könyvklub, 2001): 15.

Matthias Church in Buda is a fourteenth century Gothic hall church, reconstructed in Late Victorian Gothic Revival from 1873 to 1896, shown in Figure 12. The reconstruction work certainly influenced the selection of the style for the parliament, as the period corresponds to the time of the parliament building construction, which began in 1885 and continued until 1902.

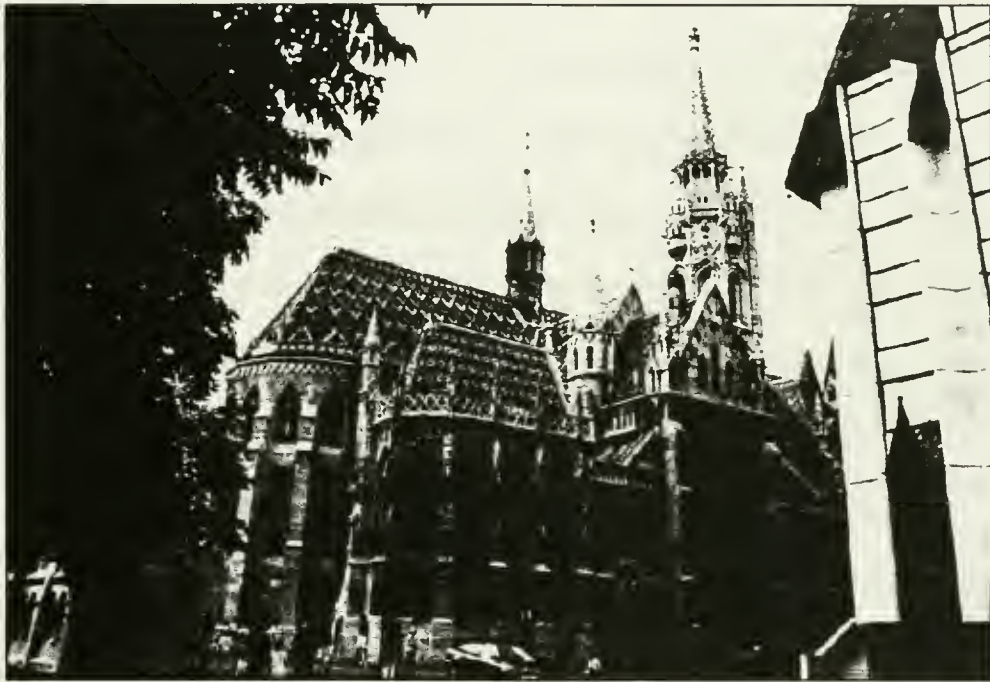


Fig. 12. Matthias Church in Buda. Photograph by the author, July 2001.

Another Gothic building is the Castle of Buda, now a World Heritage Site since 1987, which has “exercised considerable architectural influence over various periods.”⁴¹ The fortifications and the palace were built in the thirteenth century. Through cycles of destruction and reconstruction, the Castle retains little of its Gothic origins, which are visible in only a few places, such as the sub-basement vaults.

⁴¹UNESCO World Heritage List. “Budapest, the Banks of the Danube and the Buda Castle Quarter.” available online at <http://www.unesco.org/whc/nwhc/pages/doc/mainf3.htm>.

The Gothic references were expressed by Steindl in his entry:

I planned the whole building in the Gothic style. This splendid style of the Middle Ages evokes in the most beautiful way the connection between the material and spiritual worlds, with its perfect beauty raising enthusiasm and with its definite form soaring towards heights.⁴²

The building truly responded to the Hungarian nation by reconnecting with material historical precedents and by providing a new mean of expression of nationalistic ideals.

Like the Centre Block in Ottawa, the parliament in Budapest displayed a variety of historical references, but in this case, the references were both foreign and local. To a certain extent, the parliament in Budapest is closer in expression to Westminster than to the Centre Block. It recalls features of Westminster, by its urban character, palatial grandeur, delicate window tracery, and highly detailed pinnacles. The Hungarian parliament is more delicate and ornate than the more robust and picturesque Centre Block, which is representative of the shift in the Gothic Revival mode.

By the last quarter of the nineteenth century, Gothic Revival architects were looking at different historical sources than their predecessors. Looking for more orderly planning, architects were influenced by the ideas of the École des Beaux-Arts. Other architects were searching for purer medieval forms than the ones seen in the High Victorian Gothic Revival. The Early English Gothic was used as a reference by architects like George Frederick Bodley (1827-1907), who had worked in George Gilbert Scott's office. The Gothic Revival morphed into different forms in the twentieth century, as we will see in Chapter 3.

⁴²József Sisa, Bence Tihanyi and Agnes Bakos, The Parliament House of Hungary. (Budapest: Magyar Könyvklub, 2001): 26.

CHAPTER 3

PRESERVATION PERSPECTIVES

After each of the three parliament buildings were completed, they were subjected to various pressures, due to the need to accommodate an increasing number of occupants, and to integrate new uses. Moreover, they had to counter the early deterioration of the building, including consequences of fires. In the last half of the twentieth century, unprecedented preservation work took place. These approaches are examined in this chapter.

Early Changes

Ottawa

At the beginning of the twentieth century in Ottawa, the Centre Block had become cramped, due to the increase in Members of Parliament since the Confederation of 1867.⁴³ In 1902, a small addition was built in the central courtyard. The addition can be seen in a yellow outline in Figure 13. The structure housing the boiler room was dismantled and rebuilt, by extending it vertically three more floors for offices. A large room for the Railway Committee was also created in the attic.⁴⁴

⁴³There were 130 MPs in 1866, 181 MPs in 1867, and 214 MPs by 1908. History of elections results for federal ridings, available online at <http://www.parl.gc.ca/information/about/process/house/hfer/hfer.asp?language=E>.

⁴⁴Department of Public Works, Annual Report 1902, (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1903): 19.

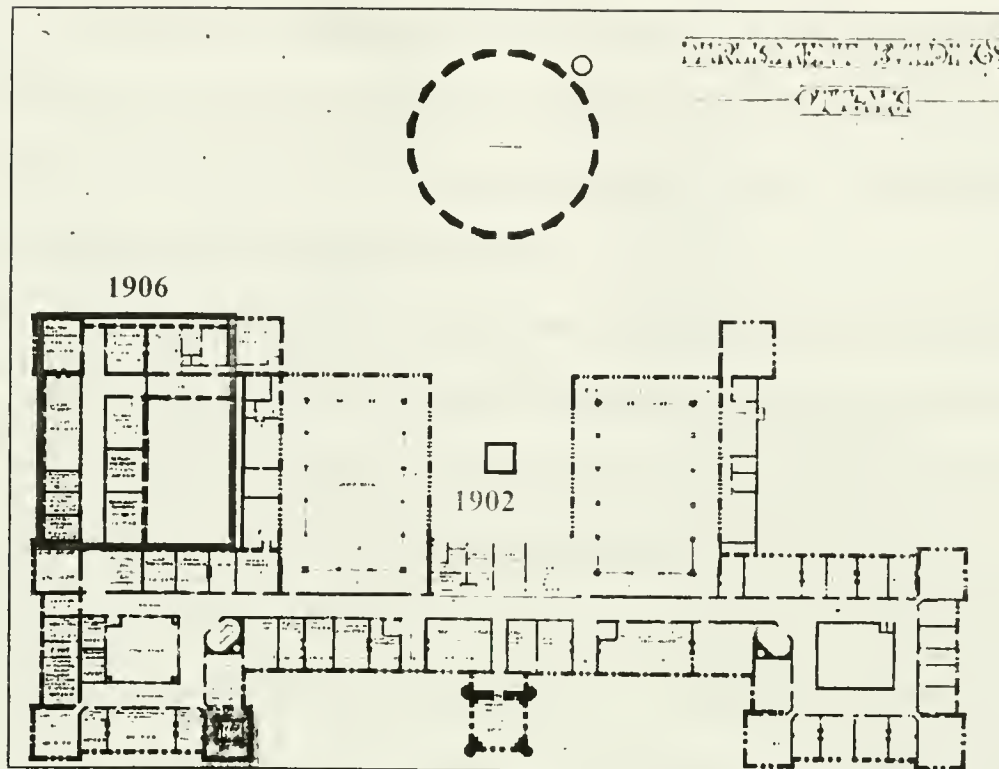


Fig. 13. First Floor Plan of the Centre Block, 1909. National Archives of Canada (NMC 122080).

The materials and construction techniques were the same as the ones used for the initial building construction. This small addition was not visible from the exterior and did not remove any important material, but it did impact the interior. Natural light had been provided to the main entrance by the courtyard. With the addition, light was now blocked. The space, which was already quite dim, must have become even darker. This first addition was only a modest and temporary solution to the lack of space.

To address the growth of parliament and to provide a development framework for the young capital, the Ottawa Improvement Commission asked Montreal landscape architect Frederick G. Todd to produce a master plan to transform Ottawa into a capital city representative of the country.

The report was submitted in August 1903 and confirmed the appropriateness of the architecture of parliament, which was to Todd “pure Gothic, the style which is perhaps better suited than any other to a picturesque location.”⁴⁵ It also recommended that new work follow the style already established.

By 1906, more space was required in the Centre Block and a large addition was built on the north-west side, forming an L-shape structure with a corner tower enclosing a new courtyard. This addition can be seen in a red outline on Figure 13. Not only was an addition built, but a modification to the existing building was also done. The existing mansard roof between the two towers was replaced with a full attic story with stone exterior walls. In keeping with the statements of the Todd Report regarding the appropriateness of the Gothic, the new work followed the original design and was “similar in all respects.”⁴⁶ Several notable exceptions were the introduction of iron and cement for the roof structure, and “some minor features variations.”⁴⁷ The new work is visible in Figure 15, by comparing with Figure 14. The surface color of the stone wall on the upper left part of the building is slightly paler than the rest. The windows are well-proportioned for the story which is smaller than the one below, and their positioning corresponds to the general rhythm of the lower floor bays. One difference lies in the joining of the window arches into a series of alternating windows and blank windows. These features echo the articulation of the roof cornice and help integrate the new floor within the building, as the line of windows forms a continuous band, linking the towers.

⁴⁵Frederick G. Todd, Report to the Ottawa Improvement Commission. (Ottawa: n.p., 1903): 2-3.

⁴⁶Department of Public Works, Annual Report 1907. (Ottawa: King’s Printer, 1908): 27.

⁴⁷Ibid.



Fig. 14. The First Centre Block. Photograph by Samuel McLaughlin, c.1880. National Archives of Canada. (NA 3760)



Fig. 15. The Centre Block after the 1909 Addition. City of Ottawa Archives (CA-2930).

The new wing replicates the west elevation by extending it further, as it replicates the corner tower to form an asymmetrical composition. Overall, the effect is balanced, and anchors the building more strongly to its site. The addition reflects picturesque elements of design by bringing asymmetry to the building and by integrating well with the site and its surrounding buildings.

This addition provided more space for the offices of the Speaker and the Prime Minister, as well as large meeting spaces. This can be seen in the floor plan shown in red outline, in Figure 13. One distinctive feature of the new plan is the emphasis in the corridor axis, as the new west corridor terminates at a window, whereas the original corridors do not have similar termination points. Also, circulation is disrupted around the atrium, where two new rooms block peripheral circulation. The addition shows a different approach in planning, which will be seen later in the new Centre Block. The Centre Block was not the only building undergoing expansion: both the West and East Blocks received additions between 1874 and 1910,⁴⁸ in the same style and following the configuration of the original structures. All these early additions followed closely the original design schemes; materials and details only departed in minor ways. The result was a cohesive ensemble with suitable variations contributing to the original picturesque ideas. In 1912, the Ottawa Improvement Commission emphasized in its report the appropriateness of the High Victorian Gothic used for the parliament buildings.

⁴⁸Department of Public Works, Annual Report 1874, (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1875): 129-130; idem, Annual Report 1905, (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1906): 114-120; idem, Annual Report 1910, (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1911): 152-155.

In fact, Todd's 1903 report was incorporated into the commission's report.⁴⁹ Although it seems that at this time, there were no reasons to depart from the original design, the stylistic view was to change just a few years after.

As expansion for parliamentary buildings became more pressing, a Federal Plan Commission, chaired by Sir Herbert Holt, was appointed by the Ottawa Improvement Commission to offer a solution to the problem. The Holt Report was submitted in 1915, and made recommendations regarding "a definite scheme for future development," which proposed to expand both eastward and westward of Parliament Hill.⁵⁰ It also mentioned architectural character. While it recommended that architectural design "should be in harmony and not in contrast" with the existing buildings, it also suggested that "inspiration may be derived from the close and sympathetic study of the beautiful buildings of Northern France of the 17th century."⁵¹ This was a departure from the previous reports which had praised the use of Gothic; now the recommendations did not make allusions to any kind of Gothic interpretation, and offered a different historical reference for design. This change was influenced by the new Château Laurier hotel (1908-1912), designed by Ross & MacFarlane⁵² for the Grand Trunk Railway company, which the Commission acknowledged and praised in its report.

⁴⁹Ottawa Improvement Commission, Report and Correspondence of the Ottawa Improvement Commission Relating to the Improvement and Beautifying of Ottawa, (Ottawa: King's Printer for Canada, 1912): 21-23.

⁵⁰Federal Plan Commission, Report of the Federal Plan Commission: Holt Report, (Ottawa: King's Printer for Canada, 1915): 87.

⁵¹Ibid.: 90-91.

⁵²The partners were Canadian architects George Allen Ross (1879-1946) and David Huron MacFarlane (1875-1950). See note 30 for sources on the architects and their work.

The hotel was constructed on a site adjacent to Parliament Hill, just across the canal. The company was trying to surpass its rival, the Canadian Pacific Railway, which had developed a chain of railway hotels across Canada. The chain began with the Château Frontenac in Quebec City (1892), designed by American architect Bruce Price (1845-1903). Price combined elements of Scottish Baronial and French Loire castle architecture to form what became known in Canada as the “Château style.”⁵³ The railway system and the affiliated hotels became symbols of Canadian unity reaching from coast to coast. The Trans-Canadian railway system embodied the motto “*A mari usque ad mare*” (“From sea unto sea”) adopted at Confederation.⁵⁴

Some features of the High Victorian Gothic Revival, such as the picturesque qualities, the asymmetry, the vertical rise and high pitched roofs, and in some cases the rugged stone treatment and the polychromy, were being re-interpreted through the so-called Château style. The approach was rapidly propagated throughout the regions and seem to offer, for the first time, a consistency of design in different parts of the country. The look was well-received and became highly fashionable, leaving behind the image of High Victorian Gothic. The fading of the High Victorian Gothic Revival and the rise of the Château style were to be consequential in the decisions regarding the reconstruction of the Centre Block and later in the expansion of buildings in the Parliamentary Precinct.

⁵³On the development of the Château style, see: Harold D. Kalman, The Railway Hotels and the Development of the Château Style in Canada, (Victoria: The Morriss Printing Company Ltd., 1968), also Abraham Rogatnick, “Canadian Castles Phenomenon of the Railway hotel.” The Architectural Review vol. XLVI No. 843 (May 1967): 365, and David Rose, “The Canadian Railway Hotel Revisited: The Château Style Hotels of Ross & MacFarlane,” Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada Bulletin vol. 18 No.2 (June 1993): 32-42.

⁵⁴The importance of the railway system in the development of Canada is recognized by the Heritage Railway Stations Protection Act (HRSPA), proclaimed in 1990, which grants federal protection to the heritage railway stations. Source: Parks Canada, available online http://parksCanada.pch.gc.ca/r/stations/english/hrstxt_e.htm.

London

In London, very early on in the occupancy of the building, Members of Parliament began complaining about problems with acoustics, ventilation, and heating system. These issues were debated extensively, and it took years to resolve them after several approaches were tested.⁵⁵ The ceiling was re-worked in 1852 after Pugin's death. Parts of the design schemes were never completed, such as the enclosure by further building of



Fig. 16. The Palace of Westminster. Photograph by the author, July 2001.

the New Palace Yard that was abandoned in 1864. Other modification plans were made by E. M. Barry, son of Sir Charles Barry, who had died in 1860. One plan of 1867 was to enlarge the House of Commons chamber and to construct a new dining room, but these proposals were never realized.

The Palace of Westminster, as it now stands, can be seen in Figure 16.

⁵⁵Michael Harry Port, ed., The Houses of Parliament, (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1976): 226-228.

After forty years of construction, many parliamentarians had had enough of the escalating costs, and the younger Barry was dismissed by the budget-minded First Commissioner of Works in 1870.⁵⁶

In the 1870s, not even ten years after completion of the building, there were signs of stone deterioration, and replacement work began. It is curious to note such early repairs to the building, although it was forty years old at the time and pollution in London was a major problem. Further work was done on the building in 1883 when the Law Courts of 1822-25, designed by Sir John Soane using a Classical vocabulary, were removed from the side of Westminster Hall, and functions were relocated in the new Law Courts of George Edmund Street.⁵⁷ A second campaign of repair work on the statues and carvings was undertaken in the 1930s as the building was suffering from the effects of pollution. During the First World War the Palace survived almost unscathed, but much more serious damage occurred in 1941, which will be covered in the next section.

Budapest

While plans for expansion were being examined in Ottawa early in the twentieth century, in Budapest, construction of the parliament building was nearing completion, almost twenty years after the design competition was held. Finally, in 1902, the nation had a house of its own, but the late Gothic Revival building generated mixed reviews. An artist's rendering of the building is shown in Figure 17.

⁵⁶Sir Robert Cooke, The palace of Westminster: Houses of Parliament, (London: Burton Skira, 1987): 218, 235-237.

⁵⁷Margaret Richardson and MaryAnne Stevens, eds., John Soane Architect: Master of Space and Light, (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 1999; reprint, Montreal: Canadian Centre for Architecture, 2001: 268-270.

A local newspaper called it a “magnificent, Gothic, soaring stone giant, from which all grace for the country’s benefit is destined to rise...no other nation has a more splendid and magnificent edifice.”⁵⁸ While some praised the impressive scale, elaborate interiors and palatial grandeur, many Members of Parliament expressed their indignation about the gigantism of the building, the enormous financial costs and the lavish use of color and gold leafing for the interiors. In the architectural press, János Bobula, architect and Member of Parliament from 1892 to 1897, in comparing architecture and music, stated that the new parliament was the “most unpleasant cacophony ever generated from an orchestra by a clumsy conductor.”⁵⁹

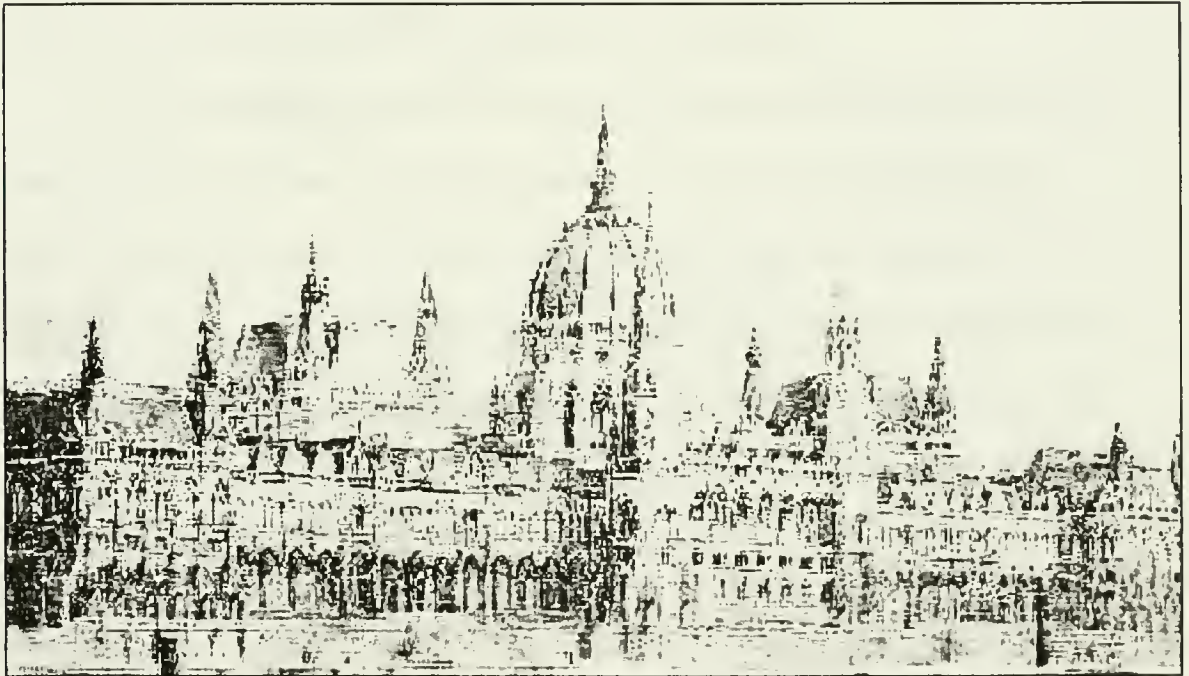


Fig. 17. Rendering of the Parliament Building, 1899. From Budapest Museum of Fine Arts, The House of the Nation: Parliament Plans for Buda-Pest 1784-1884, (Budapest: Budapest Museum of Fine Arts, 2000): 266.

⁵⁸Ország-Világ newspaper, quoted in József Sisa, Bence Tihanyi and Agnes Bakos, The Parliament House of Hungary, (Budapest: Magyar Könyvklub, 2001): 19.

⁵⁹János Bobula in Budapesti Építészeti Szemle, quoted in László Csorba and József Sisa, Le Parlement Hongrois, (Budapest: Katalin Asbóth-Alvinczy, 1994): 36. English translation by the author.

From the reactions generated, it is clear that the new parliament building did not leave anyone indifferent; people either loved it or hated it. Despite the negative comments, the building firmly established Hungary's nationalistic pride and ideals.

However, soon after its completion, changes were made to the building. Following the end of the First World War, the Hungarian territory was reduced to less than one third of its size. Consequently, representation in parliament was reduced, which liberated office space. With room available, a number of offices on the House of Lords side of the parliament, at the half basement level, were transformed into museum installations. The decision to create museum rooms further emphasized the role of the building as a "House of the Nation," exhibiting the work of the country's best talents.

Around the same time, the building began showing signs of deterioration, as the exterior soft Sósút limestone started eroding, through the effects of atmospheric pollution. The initial choice of the limestone was judged to be an error that should be corrected. Hence, replacement work was done using the hard limestone of the Piszke region, which would replicate the original design. The work began as early as 1924, about the same time as the second campaign of repair work at Westminster, and would continue in the following decades.⁶⁰

⁶⁰József Sisa, Bence Tihanyi and Agnes Bakos, The Parliament House of Hungary, (Budapest: Magyar Könyvklub, 2001): 23.

Response to Destruction

Ottawa

After the initial construction and early changes, each of the three parliament buildings suffered damage from a major fire. The parliament in Ottawa was the first. On February 3rd, 1916, a fire broke out in the reading room, and rapidly spread through the building. Damage to the interior was extensive. Only the library remained intact, thanks to the parliamentary librarian who closed the metal doors separating the main building from the circular library structure. A number of paintings and a few pieces of furniture were also saved from the flames. Most parts of the building were still standing after the fire, as can be seen in Figure 18 below. Planning for a reconstruction began shortly after.



Fig. 18. The Centre Block the Morning after the Fire. National Archives of Canada, photograph by Samuel J. Jarvis (PA-024985).

Architects John A. Pearson and J. Omer Marchand were appointed by a parliamentary committee to investigate the building's condition and to submit a report on the damage sustained by the Centre Block.⁵¹ They first reported on 17 February 1916 that the "major portions of the buildings left standing had not suffered material damage" and that the West Wing, as the 1909 addition was called, was "injured by fire."⁵²

The building was to be restored using all remains. Plans were prepared by Pearson & Marchand, the appointed architects, as well as by D. Ewart, the Dominion Consulting Architect and by E. L. Horwood, the Chief Architect of Canada, at the request of the committee, which was seeking second opinions.⁵³

However, Members of Parliament requested that more space be created through the reconstruction work. In response to this request, Pearson & Marchand decided to expand westward and add an upper floor. This involved the demolition of the West Wing, as well as the damaged upper parts of the remaining walls. The decision reflected a historical value judgement based on a differentiation between the original building, which was considered historic and thus to be kept, and the 1909 wing, which was considered expendable.

During demolition of the walls in the original section of the building, the backings and interior masonry of the walls revealed "a very shocking state of affairs" to the architects.

⁵¹Department of Public Works. Annual Report 1916. (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1917): 35.

⁵²John A. Pearson to the Hon. Robert Rogers, 29 July 1916, National Archives of Canada, RG11, V.2653, file 1595-25A.

⁵³Borden Papers, National Archives of Canada, No. 87803.

They concluded that the original walls did not have the necessary masonry ties, and could not support the addition of an upper story.⁵⁴ Hence the walls were deemed unfit for re-use and the architects ordered their total demolition in July 1916 without advising the parliamentary committee.⁵⁵ The results of the demolition can be seen in Figure 19.

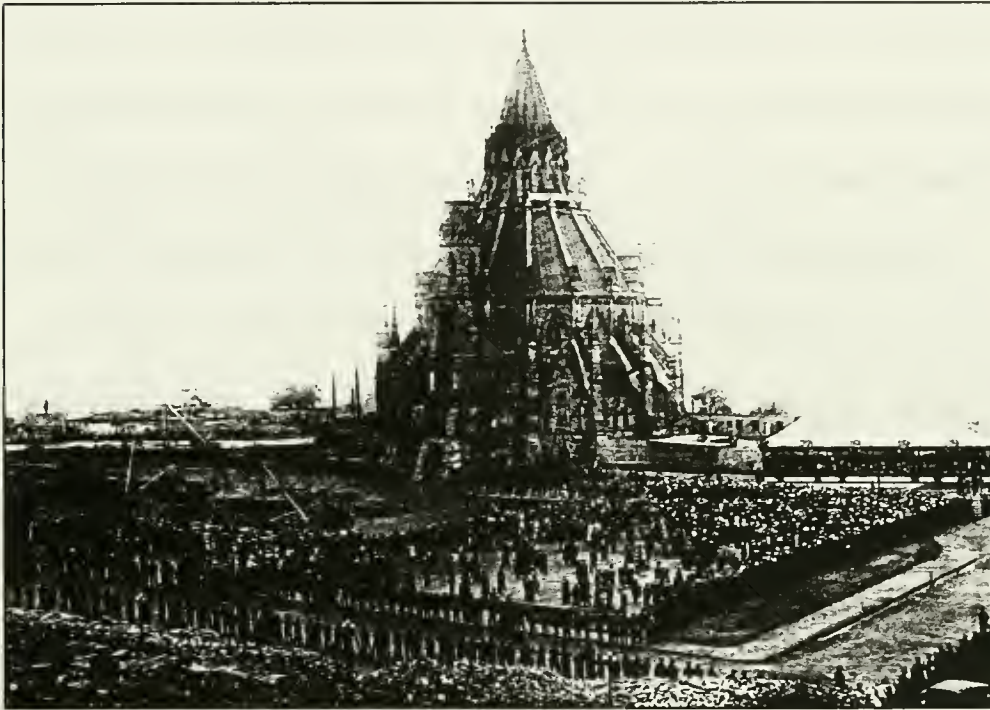


Fig. 19. The Centre Block after Demolition. City of Ottawa Archives (CA-2257).

In the words of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Leader of the Opposition: “the public of Ottawa were startled to see day after day the walls of the old building being demolished and completely razed down.”⁵⁶

⁵⁴John A. Pearson to the Hon. Robert Rogers, 29 July 1916, National Archives of Canada, RG11, V.2653, file 1595-25A.

⁵⁵Ibid.

⁵⁶Sir Wilfrid Laurier to the Hon. Robert Watson, 24 August 1916, Laurier Papers, National Archives of Canada, Reel C-910.

The demolition of the original building and the handling of the construction contract caused the resignation of three members of the reconstruction committee who disapproved of the decisions.⁵⁷

The architects' conclusion that the walls were unfit is curious, since provisions had been made in the original specifications to ensure the presence of masonry ties. Furthermore, previous work on the building in 1902 and 1909 had required the walls to be opened, and their condition could have been evaluated at either of those times. However, no mention of missing ties or structural weaknesses were made.

After much controversy and heated arguments published in the city newspapers, plans for a new building, larger in footprint and of greater height, were prepared by Pearson & Marchand. Following direction from the parliamentary committee, the new design was to recall Gothic characteristics of the first building, but was to use contemporary methods of construction and integrate modern services.

The new Centre Block, shown in Figure 20 and 21, was ready for the opening of the parliamentary session on September 1, 1919.⁵⁸ Construction was to continue until 1927 with the completion of the Peace Tower.

The press called the new building “a noble Gothic pile which epitomizes traditions and history of country.”⁵⁹ The press seemed to agree that the Gothic character of the past building was well integrated in the new structure.

⁵⁷Sir Wilfrid Laurier to the Hon. Robert Watson, 24 August 1916. Laurier Papers, National Archives of Canada, Reel C-910.

⁵⁸Department of Public Works, Annual Report 1920, (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1921): 5.

⁵⁹Throop's Scrapbook on Parliament Building, 1916-23, Library of Parliament, Ottawa.

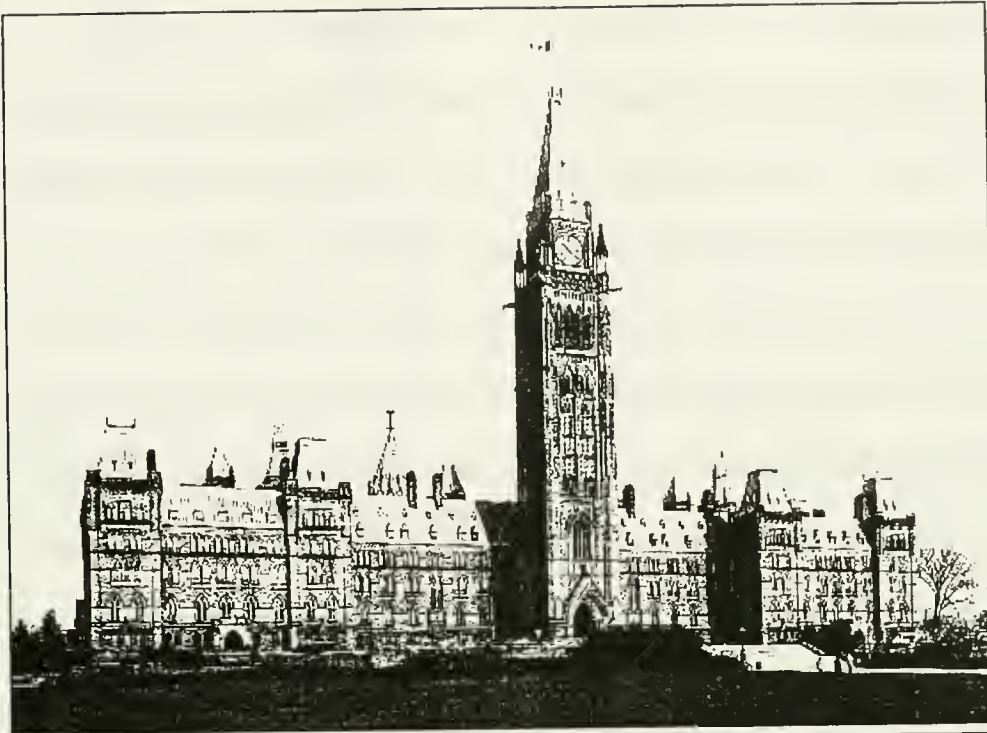


Fig. 20. The Second Centre Block, Completed in 1927. Public Works and Government Services Canada, Heritage Recording and Technical Data Services, 1991.

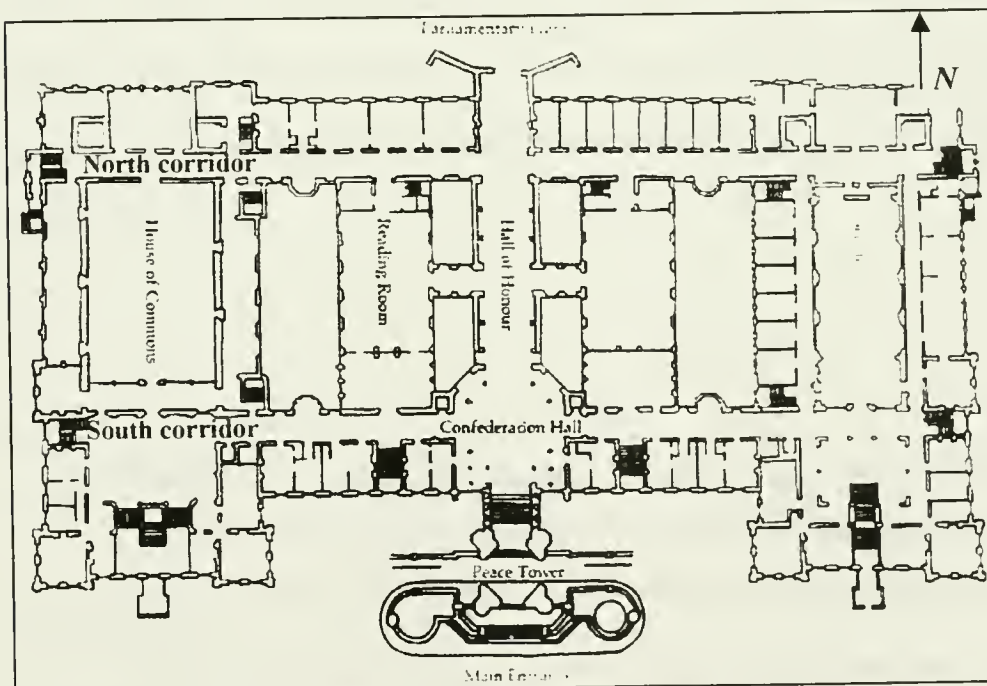


Fig. 21. Floor Plan of the Second Centre Block. National Film Board of Canada, *Stones of History* (Ottawa 1967).

The new Centre Block also received favorable reviews in Construction,⁶⁰ in The Canadian Illustrated Monthly,⁶¹ and in the Journal of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada (JRAIC). Although in the latter, it was mentioned that the article space limitation and the incompleteness of the buildings in 1924 did not permit an attempt at a “detailed description or criticism.”⁶² The JRAIC followed up on its first article in the same year. Architect Percy E. Nobbs criticized Canadian architecture for its “neo-mediaevalism” represented in the new building, adding that “at the moment Canadian architecture is a polite fiction.”⁶³ Architect John M. Lyle commented on the building later in 1927 when the Peace Tower was completed. He stated:

I cannot help feeling that it was a great mistake on the part of the Government when it was decided to erect a new building in place of the one that was destroyed, that they did not make a departure from such a debased style of architecture as that of the Victorian era.⁶⁴

Both Nobbs and Lyle seemed anxious to leave the medieval references behind and introduce new ideas that would be particular to Canada. However, their comments were not unbiased: no doubt they had wanted the commission that went to Pearson & Marchand.

⁶⁰W.D. Cromarty, “Ottawa and the Parliament Buildings,” Construction, Vol.XVII, No.5 (May 1924): 140.

⁶¹C.L. Bishop, “Canada’s New Capital Building,” The Canadian Illustrated Monthly (March 1920): 29-32.

⁶²“The New Parliament Building, Ottawa,” Journal of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada, Vol.1 (Jan./March 1924): 5-15.

⁶³Percy E. Nobbs, “Canadian Architecture,” Journal of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada, Vol.1 (July/September 1924): 92.

⁶⁴John M. Lyle, “Architecture in Canada,” Journal of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada, Vol.4 (February 1927): 62.

Gothic characteristics of the first building can be found in the treatments of the exterior and interiors, where ribbed vaults, pointed arches, and stone carvings. The overall effect is quite austere, with none of the “cheerfulness” or “elegance” that Fuller & Jones mentioned in their winning entry for the first building. The polychromy of the stone and roof was abandoned for a monochrome treatment of Nepean sandstone and copper roofing. The elevations consist of simple flat planes, with regularly placed window openings, varying in proportion and divisions at each level. The lack of horizontal or vertical delineation in the stone treatment leaves the façades unanimated.

Although the front elevation of the first and second buildings seem similar in articulation, the plans are very different. The plan of the second building is divided along strong, symmetrical axes, which were not present in the first building. Of the two main parallel corridors spanning the East-West direction, the North corridor is of higher hierarchical order, as it gives access to primary spaces, while the South corridor serves secondary and tertiary rooms. The two main axes are interconnected by a series of narrower parallel corridors. These are located on all levels except where only one corridor links the back and front of the building: the Hall of Honour. In the early reconstruction drawings, the central hall was placed at the heart of the building, as found at Westminster and at the Hungarian parliament, but was later moved forward, where the south corridor meets the entrance stair.⁶⁵

⁶⁵As seen in the floor plans of Pearson & Marchand, Borden Papers, National Archives of Canada, No. 87803.

Architectural historians in Canada seem to disagree on how to describe the style of the second Centre Block. It has been labeled “Modern Gothic,”⁶⁶ “Late Gothic Revival,”⁶⁷ and said to reflect influences from the “English Gothic of the twelfth century.”⁶⁸ Similarities with the second Centre Block can be found with Truro Cathedral, began in 1880 and completed in 1910. The church was designed by John L. Pearson (1817-1897) who used Early English Gothic references in search of purer forms. The Peace Tower echoes Truro’s characteristics: the strong verticality of the towers, the tall and narrow bands of windows, and the high steep roofs crowning the towers.

A description can also be found in the Heritage Character Statement of the building.⁶⁹ The Centre Block is characterized as “an example of the design methodology of the École des Beaux-Arts applied to a Gothic design vocabulary.” As Beaux-Arts design can be based on Medieval or Gothic references,⁷⁰ in the case of the Centre Block, the Gothic vocabulary seems applied to the design methodology of Beaux-Arts planning. This is shown by the strong rational form, axial circulation pattern and hierarchy of spaces, which relegate the Gothic elements to a secondary role.

⁶⁶Leslie Maitland, Jacqueline Hucker and Shannon Ricketts, A guide to Canadian architectural styles, (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 1992): 171.

⁶⁷Harold Kalman, A history of Canadian architecture, 2 volumes, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1994): 712.

⁶⁸Janet C. Wright, Crown Assets: The Architecture of the Department of Public Works, 1867-1967, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997): 141.

⁶⁹Heritage Character Statements are used by the Federal Heritage Buildings Review Office to clarify both the sources of heritage significance for a building (“reasons for importance”) and supporting attributes (“character-defining elements”). Source: Federal Heritage Buildings Review Office, FHBRO Code of Practice, (Ottawa: Canadian Heritage, Parks Canada, 1996): 12.

⁷⁰One example is Scully’s reference to “Beaux-Arts Gothic” of James Gamble Rogers’ (1917-1921) Harkness Quadrangle at Yale. Vincent Scully, American Architecture and Urbanism, (New York, Praeger, 1969; rev. ed. New York: H. Holt, 1988): 180.

The building is straight forward, with little animation of the exterior. The roof line was modified to a steeper slope, with simpler lines and no cresting. The design is indicative of the attachment to the preceding model and a reluctance to introduce true contemporary forms and methods. It is also a testament to the people's will of rebuilding their national symbol at a time of war, when experienced labor and high quality materials were difficult to find.

Only seven years before the fire, the High Victorian Gothic was still the preferred choice, as additions were being built in the same style and materials as the first buildings. By 1916, preferences had changed. The reconstruction was a turning point in architectural design, as it represented a transitional period in Canadian architecture. Hitchcock considered the building a reconstruction of the original "in a considerably chastened vein."⁷¹

Looking back, one could argue that the architects' decision to demolish the old building was hasty and could have benefited from further analysis. If the condition of the walls were such that it could not support an additional floor, then why add one? The existing building could have been consolidated and the required increase in space could have been accommodated by a different solution. Functions could have been relocated to the East or West Block. Another option could have been the construction of an extension to the Centre Block, as there was already a design precedent for the expansion of the Centre Block.

⁷¹Henry-Russell Hitchcock, Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, 4th ed., (New York: Penguin Books, 1977): 277.

The Report of the Federal Plan Commission had even suggested the construction of additions before the fire.⁷² These propositions included a mirror addition of the 1909 West Wing to the east side as well as two pavilion-like semi-circular structures on either side of the building. The plan is shown in Figure 22. This design, or a variation of it, would have provided more space, eliminated the need for an extra story, and re-used the original building. The haste in rebuilding prevented further analysis of the situation, which could have prevented the demolition of the original structure and provided the required spaces for parliamentarians.

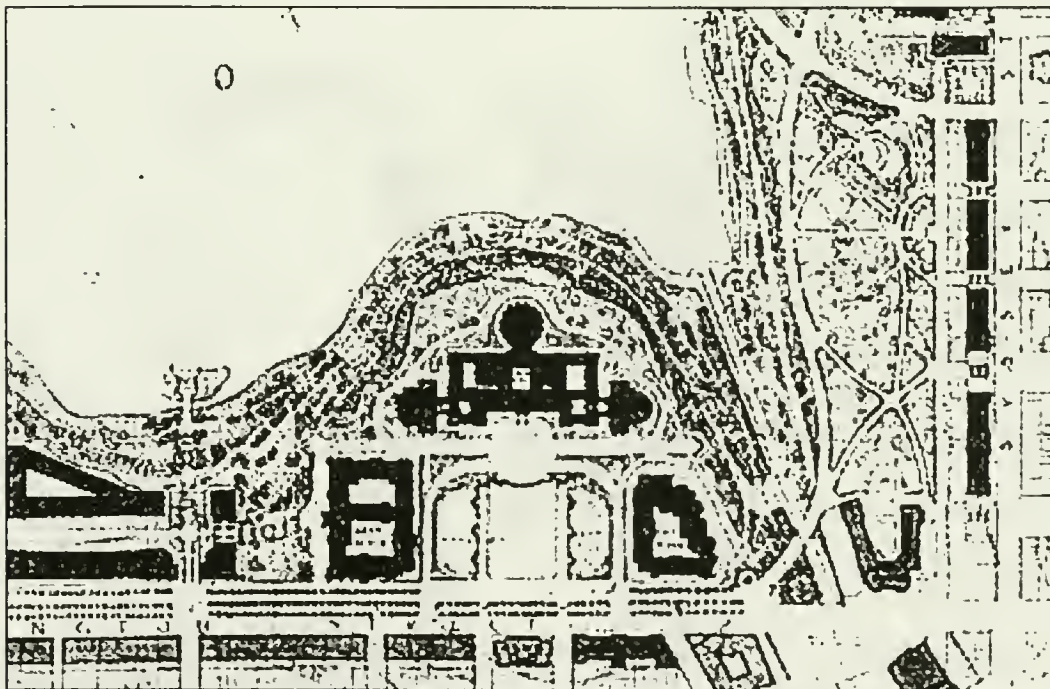


Fig. 22. Federal Plan Commission Proposal for Government Centre. From Report of the Federal Plan Commission (Ottawa 1916). National Archives of Canada (NA, NL 18068)

⁷²Plan of Government Centre, Federal Plan Commission, Report of the Federal Plan Commission on a General Plan for the Cities of Ottawa and Hull, Ottawa: 1916.

London

In London, the parliament building was also plagued with fires, as the city was heavily damaged by bombing during the Second World War. The Commons Chamber was destroyed by bombs and a subsequent fire on 10 May 1941, while Westminster Hall was saved. Churchill can be seen evaluating the damages to the House of Commons in Figure 23. The Commons debated the question of rebuilding. There were a few arguments in favor of a faithful restoration, and a few advocating a modern design. Both approaches



Fig. 23. Churchill Looking at the Ruins after the Bombing. From Jennifer Tanfield, *In Parliament 1939-50*, front cover.

failed to convince a majority of MPs. On 28 October 1943, Churchill's insistence on rebuilding on the old foundations was accepted. The setting and the function had become inseparable, even though the original oblong Chamber had become too small to accommodate all MPs. In fact, Churchill outlined two main characteristics of the House of Commons.

First, that it should stay oblong (representative of the two-party political system) and second, that it should not be big enough to contain all its Members at once without overcrowding, as he believed that it conveyed a sense of intimacy.⁷³ The former Chamber can be seen in Figure 24 below.

A Select Committee was appointed to oversee and report on the reconstruction of the



House of Commons. The Committee seemed approving of the former design, as they mentioned that alterations “may be desirable while preserving all essential features.”⁷⁴

Fig. 24. The Former Chamber. From Christine Riding and Jacqueline Riding, eds., The Houses of Parliament, (London: Merrell, 2000): 128.

⁷³Sir Winston Churchill, speech in the House, 29 October 1943, cited in Sir Robert Cooke, The Palace of Westminster: Houses of Parliament, (London: Burton Skira, 1987): 338-339.

⁷⁴Select Committee proceedings, quoted in Jennifer Tanfield, In Parliament 1939-50, (London: HMSO, 1995): 41.

While some perceived the rebuilding guidelines as a “1944 imitation of an 1836 intimation of an assumed Gothic prototype,”⁷⁵ most recognized and supported the stylistic reference, but not without many tumultuous debates. In January 1945, Sir Giles Gilbert Scott (1880-1960), architect of the Anglican Cathedral in Liverpool (1904-1979) and grandson of High Victorian architect Sir George Gilbert Scott (1811-1878), was appointed by the Select Committee to design the new Chamber, and this recommendation was approved by the House. During the same sitting, Churchill made a plea to preserve the damaged archway leading to the Chamber to be kept as a monument of the ordeal the building had endured during the war. In the report of the Select Committee, Scott stated that the “Gothic detail of the old Chamber was lifeless and uninteresting,” which demonstrated his dislike of aspects of the former Chamber.



Fig. 25. The New House of Commons Chamber, Christine Riding and Jacqueline Riding, eds., The Houses of Parliament, (London: Merrell, 2000): 156.

⁷⁵Harold Nicolson, essay in the Spectator, November 1944, cited in Jennifer Tanfield, In Parliament 1939-50, House of Commons Library Document No 20, (London: HMSO, 1995): 41.

Of his new design it was said, “though still Gothic in style the effect will be entirely different.”⁷⁶ The new Chamber, shown in Figure 25, opened in October 1950, provided some sense of continuity with the former Chamber, but it also clearly departed from the original model. The new design respected the proportions and volume of the former Chamber, but provided a more austere and less ornate decoration. Certain characteristic elements of the former Chamber, such as the baluster paneling and posts, are shown in a more geometric version, with an emphasis on the vertical lines and no insertion of decorative panels. The decorated coffered ceiling was replaced by simple beams, with grooved paneling in between.

Although skillfully designed and well-detailed, the new Chamber leaves one longing for the richness of the former model. Would it have been wrong to replicate the original Chamber? Author Gavin Stamp thinks so: he mentions that an accurate restoration was not a possibility because modernization was needed, and the Chamber had been modified after Barry’s design.⁷⁷ I disagree with this view: the introduction of new systems can be feasible in a restoration. In fact, the success of most restoration work depends on the ingenuity in which new elements are respectfully and discreetly incorporated. The important issue here is the interweaving of form and function (architecture and politics) which include post-design modifications, and the importance of historical continuity that was so eloquently described by Churchill. Hence, in this context, restoration could have been a possible option.

⁷⁶Report of the Select Committee, 25 October 1944, cited in Sir Robert Cooke, The Palace of Westminster: Houses of Parliament, (London: Burton Skira, 1987): 344.

⁷⁷Christine Riding and Jacqueline Riding, eds., The Houses of Parliament: history, art and architecture, (London: Merrell, 2000): 156.

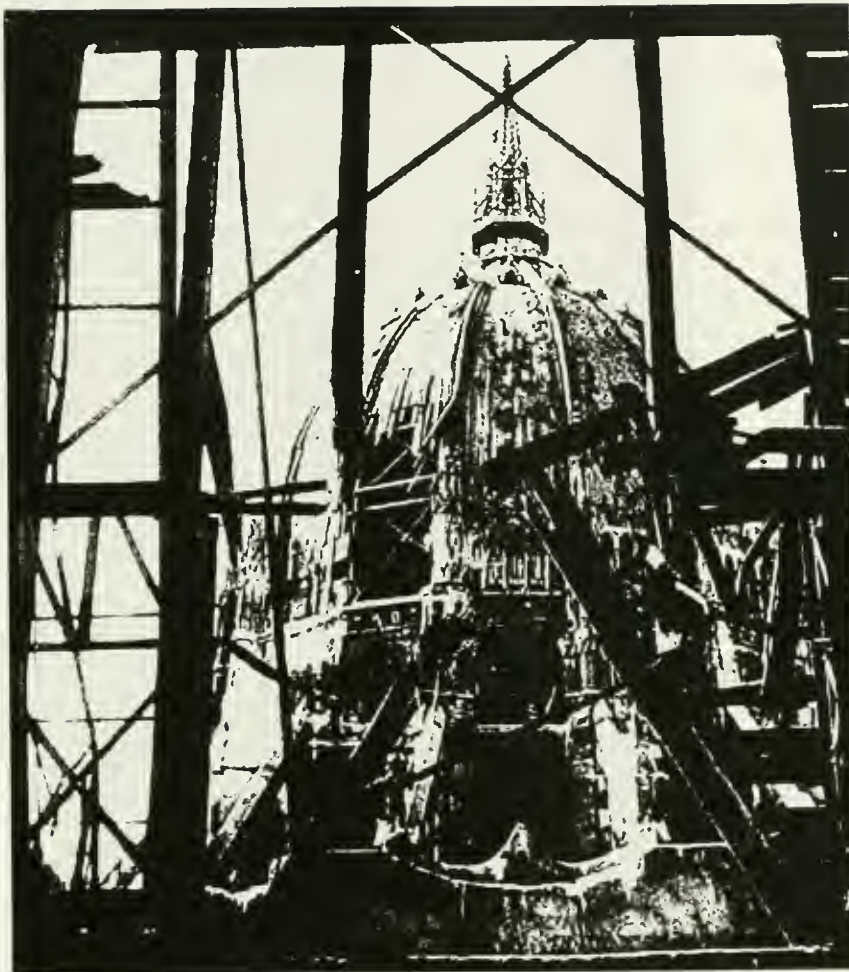


Fig. 26. The Collapsed Dome. From László Csorba and József Sisa, Le Parlement Hongrois, (Budapest: Katalin Asbóth-Alvinczy, 1994): 46.

While Westminster was struggling with the destruction of the House Chamber, Budapest endured even greater damage from the Second World War. The city suffered numerous raids, and was under occupation until its liberation by the Soviet Army. The parliament building was severely

damaged by bombs and the central dome collapsed following raids in 1945. The damages to the dome can be seen in Figure 26. After the war, the Chain Bridge linking Buda and Pest, which was destroyed by the retreating German troops, was reconstruct faithfully following the original model. For the parliament, the decision was made to reconstruct the dome faithfully and to replace the exterior masonry damaged by artillery fire. Other parts of the building, such as the painted murals, were only restored in the early 1980s.

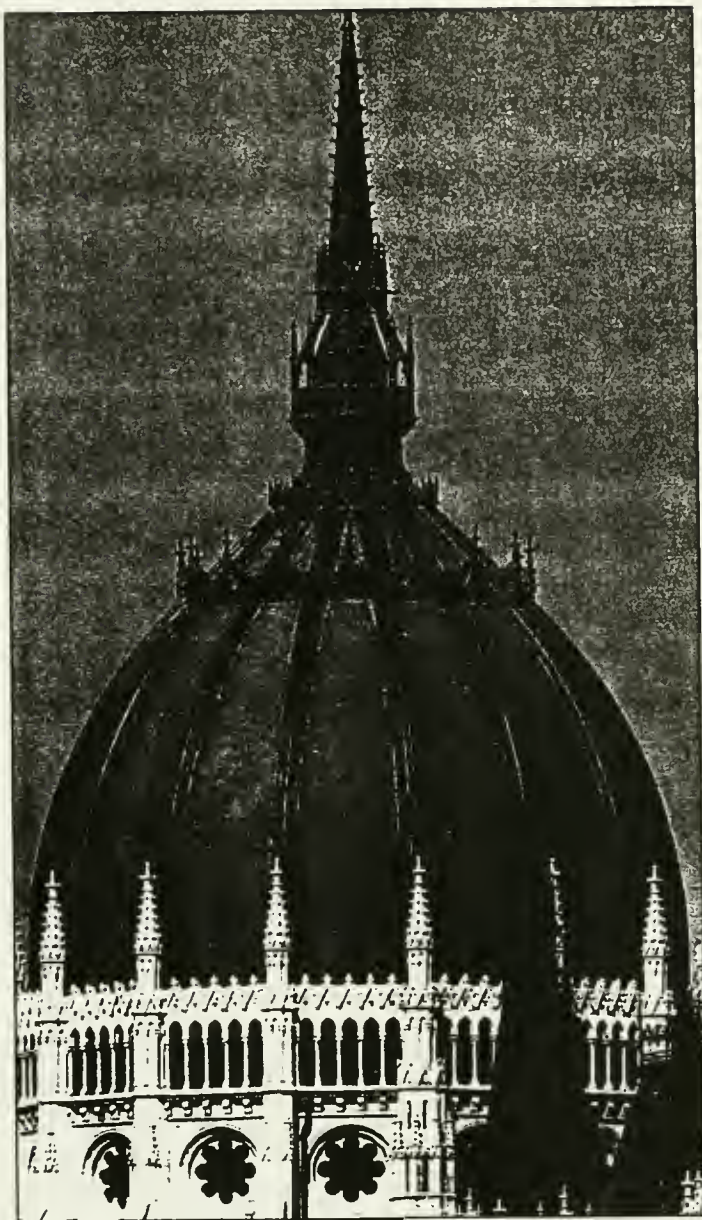


Fig. 27. The Reconstructed Dome. From László Csorba and József Sisa, Le Parlement Hongrois, (Budapest: Katalin Asbóth-Alvinczy, 1994): 56.

The desire to restore the building to its previous glory was stronger than the idea of introducing new concepts or modifications. It seems that there were no reasons to depart from the original model. The dome was restored, as can be seen in Figure 27. Restoration efforts were aided by original documentation, such as the construction drawings. Other sources were also used, including films. Towards the end of the war, just before the siege of Budapest, historical items were brought to safety and the building's interior valuables were recorded on colored filmstrips.⁷⁸

⁷⁸Even though only fragments of these filmstrips remain, they proved very useful in the reconstruction efforts. József Lukács, "Value Conservation: Furniture of the Prime Minister's study at the Parliament," Hungarian Applied Arts (February 2001): 4-5.

It must have been quite difficult to perform the work and find the materials after such a devastating war. In fact, with all the political turmoil following the end of the war, it is astonishing to see that a restoration could take place. The reconstruction undoubtedly served to re-establish the national pride through its greatest symbol.

With traces of the war everywhere to be seen in the city, there were no provisions for the commemoration of the damages the building had suffered. This shows a different approach than at Westminster, where the damaged archway to the House Chamber was left as a reminder of the events.

Recent Work: Addition, Restoration, and Preservation Structure

By the end of the twentieth century, all three parliament buildings had become classified historic structures. However, they were showing major signs of deterioration and functional shortcomings that required immediate attention. New uses and requirements could not be accommodated by the structures in their current state. The need for repair and long-term preservation management became evident and could no longer be delayed.

Ottawa

The second Centre Block, opened in 1919 and completed with the Peace Tower in 1927, offered one and a half more space than the first building, hence resolving previous accommodation problems. However, after the Second World War, with the expanding role and operations of the government, the space requirements for parliamentarians grew.

In 1955, options were studied by the Department of Public Works to provide more space in the Centre Block. One option included the construction of two wings, one to each side of the library. This option was put aside not for architectural reasons, but for functional ones: their plan did not provide enough space. Another option was the rehabilitation of the West Block into offices for parliamentarians, but this was initially rejected because of the cost and the perception that the old building had a shorter life span than a new building. The option recommended was the tearing down of the West Block and the rebuilding “in a rectangle which would produce one-and-a-half times more life,” with the “outside matching the exterior of the Main Building.”⁷⁹

⁷⁹Louis René Beaudoin Papers, National Archives of Canada. MG32C1V.3.

As we have seen in Chapter 2, the East and West Blocks form with the Centre Block a very strong ensemble, and the destruction of one of the Blocks would have negatively affected the historic value and architectural character of Parliament Hill. The recommendation was not carried out, and the rehabilitation of the West Block into offices was announced on 17 April 1961.⁸⁰ The project, which included major demolition of the interiors and discarding of historical fabric, was completed in 1963.⁸¹ The gutting of the interiors is shown in Figure 28. Interior partition walls were removed and spaces were reconfigured. Dropped ceilings were installed throughout, and carpet and vinyl tiles were laid over the floors, which originally had been covered with encaustic tiles, wood flooring and battleship linoleum in different areas.

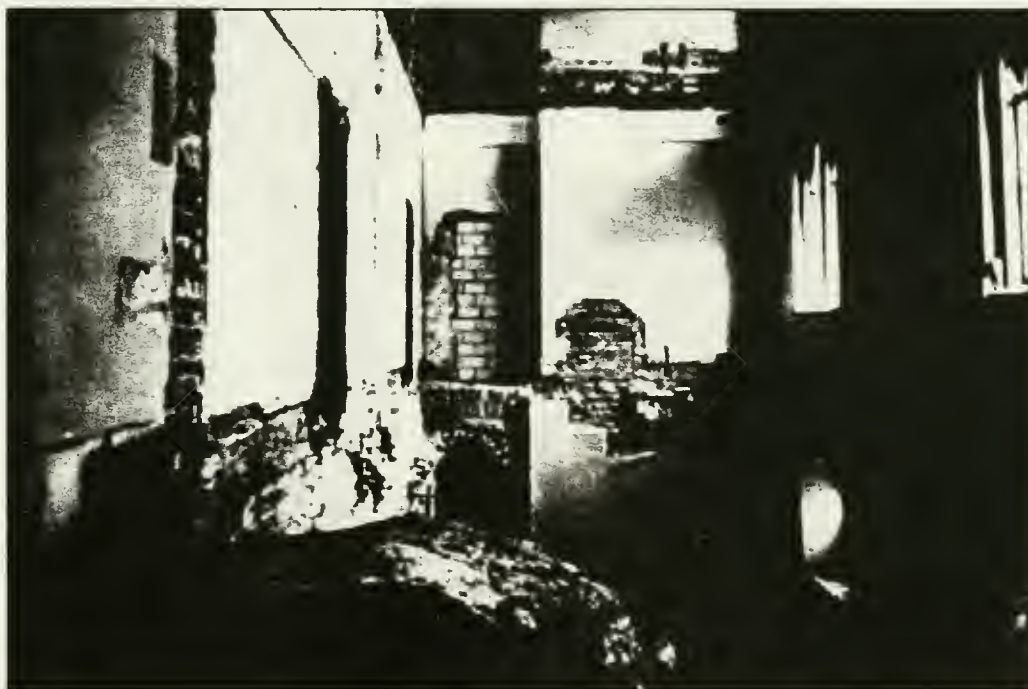


Fig. 28. The Demolition Work in the West Block, c.1963. National Archives of Canada.

⁸⁰Department of Public Works Press Release. National Archives of Canada. RG-11 V.2991. A28.

⁸¹House of Commons Debates, 16 April 1964: 2236.

Solid oak doors were cut to fit in the reduced-size openings, moldings and lighting fixtures were discarded, and very little historic fabric was left undisturbed. The resulting spaces bear no resemblance to the original rooms, and the general character of the building's interior is one of blandness. During a tour of the building in 1996, one visitor confessed to me his astonishment at the poor architectural quality of the spaces where parliamentary business is conducted.

Fifteen years after the West Block conversion, a different approach was selected for the East Block, which ensured that the building did not share the same fate as the



West Block. The decision was made in 1976 to renovate parts of the building, including the restoration of the rooms formerly occupied by the Prime Minister and his cabinet. The restored cabinet room can be seen in Figure 29.

Fig. 29. The Restored Cabinet Room, East Block. From Malak, The Parliament Buildings, (Ottawa: Key Porter Books, 1999).

However, the West Block had also provided the office of the Prime Minister, when William Lyon Mackenzie King had his office in the tower that bears his name. This could have provided argument for the restoration of the former office, but it did not. However, the space received only minor alterations during the renovation and much of the historic fabric can still be found.

The errors of the West Block were not repeated in the East Block. The building was renovated in a more appropriate fashion, where original elements were kept in place. Former official spaces were returned to their previous glory, complete with furniture, fixtures and furnishings. The only missing elements are the live gas pipes and the coal in the fireplaces. Guided tours of the restored historic rooms in the East Block began in January 1982,⁸² and are still offered today.

Around the same time as the renovations to the West and East Blocks, studies were commissioned for alterations and additions to the Centre Block. A feasibility report was produced in 1969 by Ingram & Pye architects, who developed various options for the introduction of escalators in front of the House Chamber (to connect to the new underground tunnel linking the West Block), and the construction of offices in light courts.⁸³ The introduction of escalators would have entailed major structural work inside the Centre Block as well as the removal of historic fabric, not to mention changes in circulation patterns, the alteration of the hierarchy of spaces, the noise generated, and the incompatible commercial character of such installations.

⁸²House of Commons Debates, 20 January 1981: 6366.

⁸³Ingram & Pye Architects, Feasibility Report: Parliament Buildings – Centre Block Alterations and Additions, Addendum #1, (Ottawa, n.p., 1969): 1.

The architects stated in their report that they were “prepared to recommend this scheme,”⁸⁴ but fortunately the escalator project was not realized. However, other alterations studied were carried through in the 1970s. Construction took place in the major light wells on the House and Senate side on the first floor level (which is at ground level). The work is shown in Figure 30

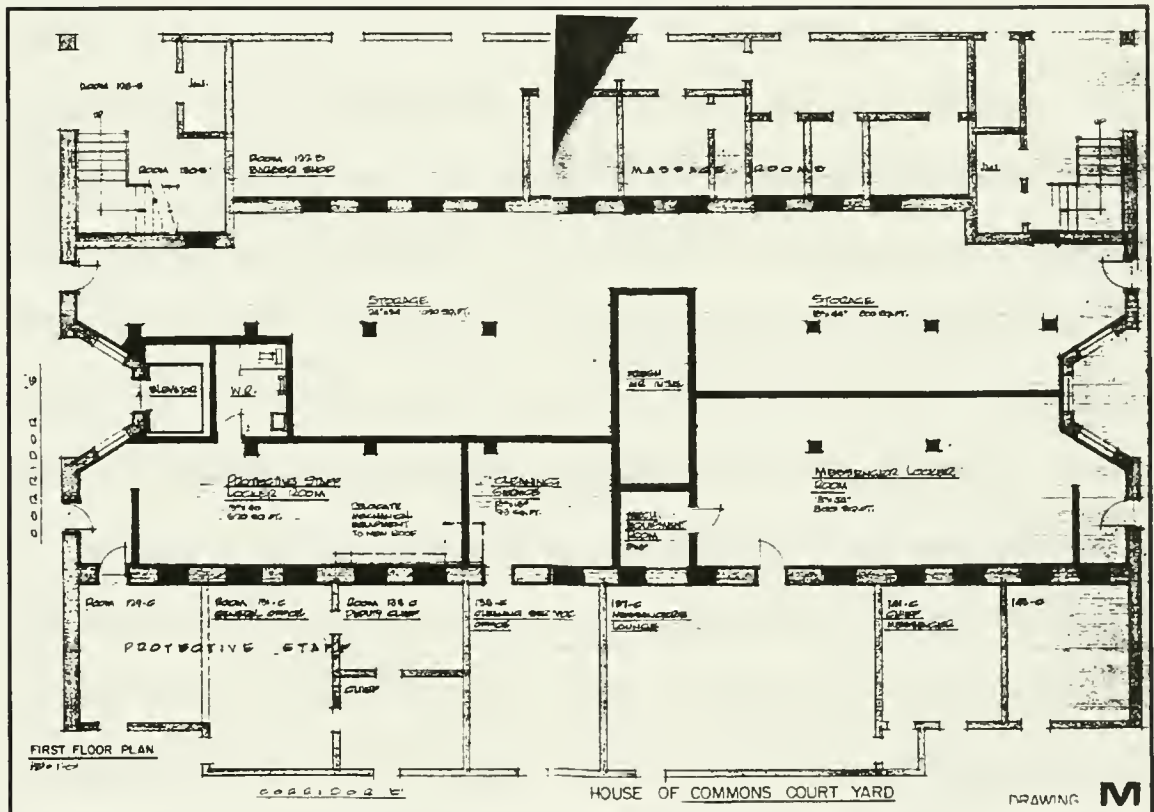


Fig. 30. Plan to Infill the Courtyard. Ingram & Pye Architects, Feasibility Report: Parliament Buildings – Centre Block Alterations and Additions, Addendum #1, (Ottawa, n.p., 1969).

⁸⁴Ingram & Pye Architects, Feasibility Report: Parliament Buildings – Centre Block Alterations and Additions, Addendum #1, (Ottawa, n.p., 1969): 10.

Secondary light wells were also filled-in on the second floor to provide storage and office space. While these new spaces were greatly needed to accommodate parliamentary functions, their construction eliminated the flow of natural light into main spaces such as the Hall of Honour, and cut off natural light at the first level, resulting in much darker interiors and increasing the need for artificial light. All this work was carried out before any of the buildings of Parliament Hill received historic designation. The Federal Heritage Buildings Review Office (FHBRO) was only established in 1981. The Centre Block was one of the first buildings to be evaluated. The building was designated “Classified” in 1986,⁸⁵ and still holds the highest score even bestowed upon a federally-owned building. With this designation, all interventions must be approved by FHBRO as per government policy. This is to prevent work that would further compromise the character of the buildings, but it also permits discussions on preservation approaches between the custodians, the architects, the users representatives and FHBRO.

More recent work include the masonry restoration of the Peace Tower and of the South facade of the Centre Block, which were completed in 1997. Cleaning, repointing, and repairs of the masonry were carried out, and the copper roof was also replaced. During site investigation, charred stones of the first Centre Block were found in the rubble backing of the walls, even though the contractor had been forbidden to re-use the stones. Structural stabilization was also required in certain areas, such as the towers, where water infiltration had caused rusting of the metal ties and beams. More work is required in order to complete all sides of the building

⁸⁵There are two possible FHBRO designations: “Classified” (the highest designation), and “Recognized.”



Fig. 31. CBUS Visible from the Esplanade. Photo from the Long-Term Architectural Planning Office, Ottawa.

The last major changes to the Centre Block took place from 1996 to 1998, when the Centre Block Underground Services building (CBUS) was constructed on the north west corner of the building. This was the first building to be constructed on Parliament Hill since the construction of the new Centre Block began in 1916. The excavation work was carried out with the utmost care and monitoring, and no

damages were inflicted on the Centre Block. The building houses power and data equipment, workshops, and storage space for furniture. The underground construction is not visible from Parliament Hill, and access is provided by two corridors at the basement level of the Centre Block. The project resulted in a mixed outcome. While the building has solved many immediate problems, it has not resolved major issues of circulation of goods to and from the building. Also, the larger than expected ventilation shafts pierce through the vegetation of the escarpment and can easily be seen from the other side of the river (see Figure 31), disturbing the natural landscape which is one main characteristic and beauty of Parliament Hill.

With these visible lessons, planning for future buildings should include more considerations for the landscape and the integrity of the site ensemble. Other recent work related to parliamentary functions include the conversion of two departmental buildings, the Confederation and Justice Buildings, into offices for MPs. These buildings can be seen in Figure 32.

Both buildings were designed by the architect's office of the Department of Public Works and were built in the early 1930s in the Château style. The Confederation Building and the Justice Building was renovated in the 1970s. The renovation removed most of the historic fabric of the Justice Building. A second renovation was completed in 2000, to provide offices for MPs. This project was the first to introduce the new standards for both office spaces and furniture for Members' offices, after they were tested in a mock-up suite in the West Block in 1998.



Fig. 32. The Justice and Confederation Buildings. Photo from the Long-Term Architectural Planning Office, Ottawa.

Space requirements for office (three rooms of 1000 square feet in total area) and furniture allocation are set out in the standards. The new custom-designed wood furniture includes workstations for staff and desks for MPs and their executive assistants, designed to accommodate modern office technologies. The goal is to provide equal quality accommodations for all MPs.

The general outcome of the renovation work in the Justice Building is satisfying, both in terms of design results and users' satisfaction. The original configuration of the corridors was re-instated, offices were divided along the lines of the original plans, and new quality materials were introduced for the long term. However, some design aspects could have been addressed more appropriately, such as the ceiling height limited by the existing mechanical system and the introduction of bulkheads in front of the windows. The construction process itself was a nightmare, as standards for quality of workmanship were repeatedly ignored, and work took more than twice the time it should have.

A long overdue inventory of historic furniture of the House of Commons was completed in 1999, and a program is now in place to return pieces to their original locations. However, there is no complete parliamentary inventory, as the Senate and the Library of Parliament (the two other institutions of parliament) are individually responsible for their accommodations. This situation underlines the problem caused by the absence of parliamentary-wide standards for preservation of furniture. In addition, through the years, pieces have been removed and displaced, resulting in a situation where some House of Commons historic pieces are now property of the Senate. This situation is indicative of the lack of coordination of preservation efforts between the three institutions of parliament.

Furthermore, each institution has developed its own set of requirements for the future and individual preservation goals. The new development plan produced by Public Works and Government Services Canada,⁸⁶ which tries to incorporate the directions given by the three institutions, is expected to bring cohesion to the ideals expressed in the individuals plans.

London

In the second half of the nineteenth century, new legislation was adopted regarding the preservation of buildings, and a listing of historic buildings began in Britain. Preservation became even more important at Westminster, where a complete inventory of the furniture was commissioned in 1974, masonry restoration was carried out between 1981 and 1994, and the Palace was designated a World Heritage Site in 1987.⁸⁷

However, balancing preservation and new functional requirements was not an easy task. Space pressures intensified in the 1970s with the growing business of Members of Parliament, the need for more support staff and for the introduction of new office technologies. In response, some of the original living quarters of parliamentary employees (certain quarters contained large suites with servants' rooms) were converted into offices for Members. Spaces in attics were also transformed into small offices and old mechanical spaces were re-fitted to make more offices. These interventions resulted sometimes in small and windowless offices still used today, as I was saw in July 2001.

⁸⁶Parliamentary Buildings Advisory Council, "A Legacy for Future Generations: The Long Term Vision and Plan for the Parliamentary Precinct," (Ottawa: Public Works and Government Services Canada, 2001).

⁸⁷Christine Riding and Jacqueline Riding, eds., The Houses of Parliament: history, art and architecture, (London: Merrell, 2000): 9 & 29.

Full capacity was reached in the Palace by the 1980s, and new accommodations were needed. After many years of discussions, the decision to construct a new building was taken by the House on 9 March 1992, based on a report of the Accommodation and Works Committee.⁸⁸ However, the new building would not provide all the required spaces. As construction began in 1998, buildings nearby were acquired, existing facilities were renovated and office space was rented.⁸⁹ Existing buildings were demolished to make way for the new construction, as seen in Figure 33.



Fig. 33. Before Demolition on the Site of Portcullis House. From the House of Lords and Parliamentary Works Directorate, The Victoria Tower Restored, (London: HMSO, 1993): 18.

⁸⁸House of Commons. Accommodation and Works Committee Press Notice No. 2 of Session 1997-98, 3 February 1998, available online at <http://www.parliament.uk/commons/selcom78/a&wpnt2.htm>.

⁸⁹New property include two adjacent Norman Shaw buildings and 7 Millbank, which was expanded and renamed the Parliament Street Building in 1991. Source: The Palace of Westminster, HC Factsheet-General Series No.11, available online at <http://www.parliament.uk/commons/lib/fs48.pdf>. The timetable for occupancy of lease spaces was set for December 2000 for 7 Little College Street, and August 2001 for Millbank House. Source: House of Lords Annual Report 1998-1999, available online at <http://www.parliament.the-stationery-office.co.uk/pa/ld199899/ldbref/10403.htm>.

The new building, named Portcullis House, was designed by Michael Hopkins and Partners and built from 1998 to 2001 (shown in Figure 34). The building was intended to relieve space pressures at Westminster and offer new standardized offices of equal quality and size, with appropriate meeting, conference and committee rooms available to Members. The building encompasses one city block and surrounds a secure, glass-covered courtyard. With Portcullis House now occupied, spaces at Westminster can be re-worked into more efficient spaces, and much needed restoration can now take place.



Fig. 34. Portcullis House. Photograph by the author, July 2001.

The design of Portcullis House presented an interesting challenge to integrate a new built form into a strong context of historic buildings, such as Westminster and the Norman Shaw buildings (the old Scotland Yard). Recalling the configuration of the buildings formerly occupying the site, Hopkins' design is fragmented into sections by the rhythm of the chimneys, which allows for gentle turns at the four corners.

Characteristics of the Perpendicular Gothic can be found in the elevations, through the rectilinear grid of masonry and metal interlacing the flat rectangular windows. The roof line, articulated by a mansard shape and vents merging to the chimneys, harmonizes with the surroundings while recalling important characteristics of the cityscape. Echoes of traditional masonry construction can be found in the load-bearing stone piers. In addition, the bronze airshafts, which connect to the chimneys on the roof, make use of elements found in adjacent historic buildings, the chimneys, but in a new way, for a modern ventilation system. The massing and volume is well in keeping with the adjacent city blocks, and the materials used harmonize well with their surroundings without trying to imitate specific colors or details. In fact, there seems to be no desire to recall elements of Westminster, as influence is derived from the other buildings in the vicinity. While the building does present an appropriate massing, the general detailing can be seen as unrefined with its broad lines and lack of small scale animation of the façades, compared to the nearby buildings. Environmental concerns and life cycle planning were important factors in the design of Portcullis House, which are in keeping with preservation goals. Materials were selected for their long life cycle and efforts were made to maximize daylight and free cooling from natural ventilation. However, in all the efforts to be “green,” there is no mention of recycling or proper disposal of construction material from the demolition of the buildings previously occupying the site, and no elements of the former structures were preserved (these can be seen before demolition in Figure 33).

Overall, Portcullis House can be seen as a good example of contemporary design, which respects its historic context and succeed in establishing a distinct architectural character, while contributing to the urban character of the site.

Westminster was the site of many important repairs during the 1990s. Masonry repairs, repointing and cleaning was done on all façades, and the restoration of the Victoria Tower was completed in 1993. The cast-iron roof tiles of the Palace were also repaired and repainted.

However, preservation work was not carried out in standard order, which is usually from roof to foundation, as was done for the 1997 restoration of the front facade of the Centre Block in Ottawa. Work at Westminster had to take into account numerous factors. One was the need to concentrate work into a limited period during the summer recess. Another was the phasing of the work, taking into account the time required for testing. Also important was the visibility of the work, in order to generate satisfaction in the public perception for the investments made. These are not ideal conditions for preservation. As such, they offer opportunities for creative thinking and force preservationists to rethink their work approach. These situations might generate new solutions that can be applied to other projects, such as new innovative management structures and contract administration.

At Westminster, a good deal of internal restoration has recently taken place. A complete rebuilding of the Lords Chamber ceiling was done in the 1980s.⁹⁰ Restoration work was carried out for committee rooms, as the building interiors had become in some places quite “shabby and tatty,” to quote a guide at Westminster. The restoration includes the reinstatement of Barry and Pugin’s original designs and details wherever possible. Carpets and wallpaper were made especially for the purpose.

⁹⁰Public Information Office House of Commons London. Factsheet No.48: The Palace of Westminster, Revised November 1994: 6.

Furniture restoration and re-use was also carried out. However, many pieces of the collection, including original Pugin furniture, are now in storage because they could not satisfy the new needs for office technologies. Other pieces have been replicated and used in new locations, such as chairs for the dining room, now used in halls. This situation illustrates the difficulty in adapting historical pieces to new uses. Sometimes it can be done with careful, reversible modifications of the original pieces, but a line must be drawn at how much modification a piece can sustain before its integrity is compromised. However, the more these historical pieces can be re-used, the more they will contribute to the character of the interiors.

Budapest

The parliament in Budapest also underwent major work in the second half of the twentieth century, which was similar in some respects to what was done in Ottawa and London. Interiors were modified to serve new needs and exteriors began to show deterioration. In addition, following the Second World War, political changes resulted in changes to the internal life of the parliament. The bicameral system was replaced by a unicameral system, through the abolition of the Upper House. With space vacated and available, new functions were introduced in the building. In 1953, the Prime Minister's office and residence were removed from the Castle of Buda, which needed major repairs, and installed in the parliament building. However, the space requirements for the suite of offices and residence were greater than what could be accommodated in the building.

Hence, office spaces and meeting rooms on the ground floor and mezzanine were divided into many small rooms, and even the library was reduced in size.⁹¹ The hallways were modified when partitions and dropped ceilings were introduced, reducing the corridor width and creating a number of small rooms. These interventions transformed the once grand and straight corridors into a maze of partition walls, depriving the visitor of a sense of direction, and reducing the flow of natural light inside the building. Compared with unaltered corridors, the spatial perception is completely transformed.

A large part of the original furniture did not meet the needs of the offices or the taste of the occupants, and some would just not be fit into the smaller spaces. Former museum rooms were transformed into offices, and their contents, seen as bound to the “old system,” were discarded or given to museums. During the Communist regime, many historical rooms changed functions, and some historic fabric was removed, resulting in a loss of historic character. However, exterior masonry repairs were carried out during that period, with the main part of the work being realized during the 1980s.

On 23 October 1988, the Republic of Hungary was declared and the free election of 386 Members of Parliament took place in 1989.⁹² With the newly elected political power, changes were again made to parliamentary accommodations. To reflect the more important role of the elected Members, offices were created for groups of Members in parliament for their use while the House is sitting.

⁹¹József Lukács, “Value Conservation: Furniture of the Prime Minister’s study at the Parliament,” *Hungarian Applied Arts* (February 2001): 4-5. Translation from Hungarian to English provided by Translation Services, Multilingual Translation Directorate, Public Works and Government Services Canada.

⁹²Parliament of Hungary, Act No. XXXIV of 1989 on the election of Members of Parliament, enacted by Parliament on 20 October 1989, with amendments of 1998, available online at http://www2.essex.ac.uk/elect/electip/hu_el8998.htm. In comparison, there are 301 MPs in Ottawa, and 659 MPs in London.

Due to the rapid changes in the political structure, the distribution of spaces was done in a random fashion, resulting in widely distributed suites of offices and non-standard space allocation. Because of the grand scale of the parliament building, it would seem unlikely that shortage of space would be a problem. However, it is now a very important issue facing the architect's office. Added functions, such as the office and residence of both the Prime Minister and the President, are not all original to or compatible with the historic structure, and require more space than can be reasonably accommodated.

In 1990, to respond to the internal pressures, the decision was taken by House Officials to return the residence of the Prime Minister to the Castle of Buda, mentioned in Chapter 2 and shown in Figure 35. The PM's residence is currently being inserted into part of the castle, and the offices might be relocated there as well.



Fig. 35. The Castle of Buda. Photograph by the author, July 2001.

These moves will free up space for House committees rooms and improve the efficiency of spaces already in use, through a more logical distribution of functions.

To accommodate all space requirements, offices were needed outside the parliament. The solution implemented was to locate offices in a modern building formerly used for offices of the Communist Party, across from Kossuth Square, a five hundred meter walk from Parliament. Since this building is not under the responsibility of the architect's office, documentation was not readily available and a visit by the author was not possible. Members of Parliament are paired by political affiliation and share both their office and their support staff. Spaces here accommodate smaller political groups, meetings rooms and committees not housed in the Parliament.

In 1999, a decision was made to restore the former Prime Minister's study in the Parliament. It had been used by the President, and would now return to its original function. Restoration was carried out in phases, as the continuity of operations had to be ensured during the work. Extensive research and documentation took place to restore the interiors as well as the furniture and furnishings. The results are astounding: not only are the rooms restored to their original design, they are now fully functional and perform the same functions they were designed for a century ago. The building's remaining historic furniture has been inventoried and is used in historic rooms. Reproduction furniture is used where original pieces are missing.

As opposed to the example of Ottawa, no major construction work took place in the Parliament Building. The removal of functions and the reconfiguration of the interiors have precluded the construction of major additions to the Parliament. Hence the light courts are still open and provide natural light as originally intended



Fig. 36. The Lower Chamber Flat Screens. From József Sisa, Bence Tihanyi and Agnes Bakos, The Parliament House of Hungary, (Budapest: Magyar Könyvklub, 2001): 89.

Recent work includes the restoration of both Chambers, and the introduction of new information technologies. This was done in a very sympathetic manner, and took only six months to complete. Small voting controls were integrated in the desks, and two large flat display screens were suspended under the arches (shown in Figure 36). The screens were sized appropriately and given a custom frame treatment similar to the ornamentation of the Chamber, which renders their presence

harmonious with the surroundings. The work was realized through a close design collaboration between the architect's office and the consulting project team. The results are good: the integration can serve as an example to the House in London and Ottawa. In London, two television sets rest on wall-mounted brackets at the gallery level. These are really out of character with the space and do not provide adequate viewing area. In Ottawa, there are no displays or televisions, but there are plans to integrated these through the upcoming restoration work in the Centre Block.

This is a difficult design challenge as the equipment can seem like a sports scoreboard. However, the results in Budapest are encouraging and can serve as inspiration to generate other appropriate solutions.

Other recent work includes the restoration of offices, conducted on an ad hoc basis, when space becomes available. This is a difficult situation, where upgrades and interconnectivity of building systems cannot always be addressed adequately. The restoration guidelines come from the historic plans, and the goal is to re-instate the original layout of spaces throughout the building.

When required by functions, light-weight, non load-bearing partitions are used to divide spaces. These can easily be knocked down when functions change, without altering the electrical or mechanical services or the finishes of the rooms. During the summer recess of 2001, one suite of office underwent major restoration work. I was able to see the work in progress, with more than fifteen people working at the same time in the suite, doing various work from electrical services to plastering and painting. Funding had been allocated specially for this project and work had to be done within three weeks. The quickness of the project development and the intensity of the work being carried out in such a tight time frame was quite amazing. A similar project had been done in the West Block in Ottawa in January 1998, and six weeks were allocated for the work to take place. The schedule of work now seems generous compared to what is achieved in Budapest. This shows how preservation work can be compressed when projects have political support and when ingenious pre-planning has been done. Clear design guidelines and tight project management can help meet preservation goals in less than ideal conditions.

Example of addition

While recent preservation work in Budapest had been limited to renovation and restoration of existing buildings, work at Westminster and in Ottawa includes renovation, restoration, and new construction. In addition, other secular Gothic Revival buildings display interesting approaches to new construction which might inform the design of a new building next to the West Block in Ottawa. One example is Northampton Guildhall,

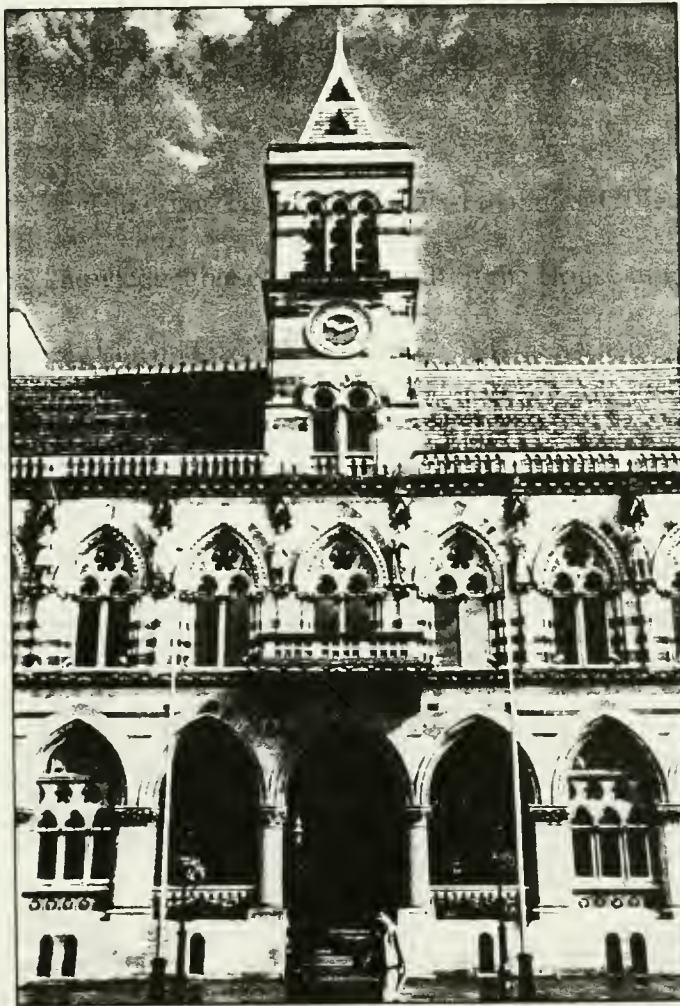


Fig. 37. Front Entrance of the Guildhall. Photograph by the author, July 2001.

which shares the same architectural influences as the West Block. The Guildhall was designed by Edward William Godwin (1833-1886) and built between 1861 and 1864.⁹³ It recently underwent both a restoration (interior and exterior) and a building addition. The Gothic Revival characteristics of the historic building were re-interpreted in the new structure. The original building, shown in Figure 37, displays a strong influence from Ruskin's Stones of Venice.

⁹³Dan Cruickshank, "Good Godwin," Architectural Review 194 (August 1993): 74-75.

Ruskin's influence can be seen in the richness of its archivolt decoration, in the use of building polychromy, and in the elaborately carved capitals. The general articulation, the rhythm of the bays, the stone carving, the central tower and the steep pitch slate roof also recalls Oxford University Museum. Additions were made to the Guildhall, which, despite the small building scale and the urban setting, can be studied for their design approaches and for their reinterpretation Gothic Revival. The first addition was made in 1889-92 by Matthew Holding and A. W. Jeffery, who added a section to the west, with a gable end and four bays. In 1992, a larger addition was completed by Stimson Walton Bond. The interiors were restored by Roderick Gradidge (1929-2000).⁹⁴ The additions are shown in Figure 38.

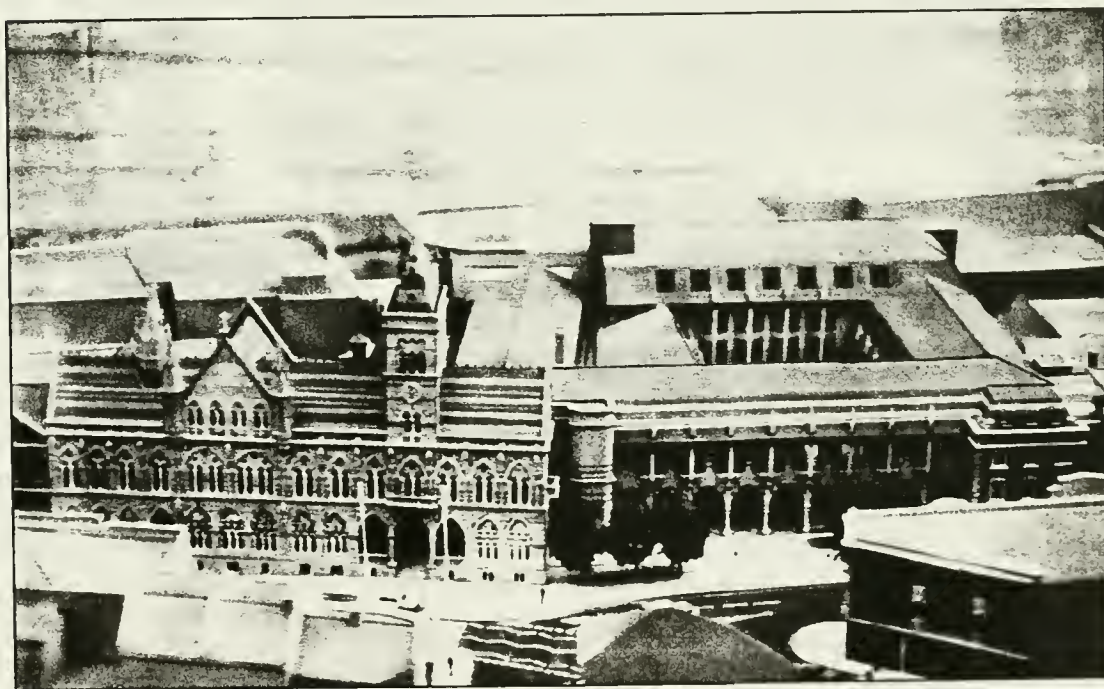


Fig. 38. The Northampton Guildhall Site Model. Photograph by the author, July 2001.

⁹⁴ Dan Cruickshank, "Good Godwin," *Architectural Review* 194 (August 1993): 76-78.

Some of the furniture was also restored, including the Mayor's chair, which was retrieved from a museum installation. The first addition, built only twenty-five years after original completion, continued the design: same style, materials, detailing, rhythm, volume and massing. The gable end serves as marker of the transition, with two large windows doubling the original ones at the upper level. The addition stretches out with a four-bay section, repeating exactly the original building. Here the duplication of built form is justified because of the short period of time since the original construction, the integrity of design and the good execution of the work.



Fig. 39. The New Addition to the Guildhall. Photograph by the author, July 2001.

The second larger addition, shown in Figure 39, follows the street line and encloses a courtyard. The elements of the original structure are either continued or re-interpreted, with a new mock-tower separating the two and marking the setback and change of angle.

The red stone banding and the polychromy of the slate roof of the original building continue into the addition. The arches, repeated along the entire new façade, are simplified in form, with no carved capital. The columns, by their flatness and omission of carved capitals, are treated like pilasters. The bay windows are a departure from the original building, and are placed in the middle of the columns, further emphasizing the non-structural nature of the arches and columns.

The addition, although sympathetic to the historic building by its form and materials, seems to stretch the facade out along the street, thereby reducing the importance of the original entrance and creating a confusing relationship between the two structures. The addition fails to establish its own identity on the street. When building contiguous to a historic building, it is an important aspect to distinguish the new, while still respecting the original. The street presence of the addition is timid due to its setback from the lot line and its lower roof line, resulting in a horizontal band with no emphasis at the end points. Other examples demonstrate that a new construction can harmonize with the surrounding built form and still define its own identity.

Despite its shortcomings, the addition to the Guildhall is nonetheless an interesting example of re-interpretation of Gothic Revival forms, as it contributes to the urban fabric of the town, and does not try to supersede the original construction.

Preservation Structure

For preservation work to take place, appropriate management structures must be in place and fit the goal of the institutions. This role is critical to the realization of preservation work, and consequential to the quality of the results. Recently, favorable economic conditions and strong political support have helped foster the re-structuring of building management in a more preservation-conscious attitude, with the formation of specialized teams working within the parliament.

Ottawa

The Long-Term Architectural Planning Office was established in April 1996 to act as knowledgeable client on behalf of the House of Commons and to provide advice on renovation and new construction work on parliamentary buildings. The office stepped in between two groups: the client/users, and the Parliamentary Precinct Directorate of Public Works and Government Services Canada, the owner and custodian of the buildings. This new level of management was deemed necessary to provide objective advice and better serve the needs of clients. Although the presence of the office increases the bureaucracy and the size of project teams, the office has nonetheless proven its role through renovation projects such as the Justice Building. However, there are shortcomings to this structure. The role of the office is limited to long-term projects, and short term issues such as maintenance and curatorial work are addressed independently. Another issue is the inability to directly contract work. This responsibility lies within the custodian's role, and must follow rigid bureaucratic contract procedures. In the end, the construction process is tedious, and can be frustrating for all parties involved.

The biggest difficulty is that representation each of the three institutions of parliament is represented separately, which precludes a concentrated preservation effort for the entire precinct. This is not the case in London and Budapest, where the architectural offices oversee activities for the ensemble of the institutions.⁹⁵ The Parliamentary Buildings Advisory Council was created in March 1999 to provide one voice for all three institutions. It confirmed, in May 2001, one of the options presented in the long-term vision developed by Public Works and Government Services Canada. This decision pushed forward the development plan in which priority was given to the construction of a new Committee Rooms Building, something all stakeholders agreed on.

London

In July 1991, a Directorate of Works was formed within the Serjeant at Arms Department to undertake the responsibilities formerly exercised by the Department of the Environment. The costs of the works directorate is shared between the two Houses, as is the responsibility for all works services.⁹⁶ The drawback is the direct exposure of parliamentarians to media scrutiny, since both Houses bear responsibility for the work commissioned. This new office oversees all parliamentary facilities, and coordinates work on all levels, from restoration to new construction. The office offers a direct link between clients and project teams, resulting in better communication of needs and more efficient planning.

⁹⁵In London, this includes the House of Commons and the House of Lords. In Budapest, this includes the governing body and the President of the Republic.

⁹⁶House of Commons Debates, 17 February 1992. Available online at <http://www.parliament.the-stationery-office.co.uk/pa/cm199192/cmhansrd/1992-02-17/Orals-2.html>.

It deals directly with users and with consultants, including contractors. This streamlined approach seems to be working for Westminster. Many projects have been successfully completed and planning is under way for more work.

Budapest

In Budapest, the architect's office has existed since the completion of the Parliament Building in 1902. It oversees daily maintenance and accommodation requirements, as well as long-term projects. However, most of the time is spent on short term issues, and long term planning cannot be given proper attention. With the free elections of 1989, more projects have been made possible through greater political concern for preservation and also in order to celebrate the millenium anniversary of the Hungarian State in 2000. Since 1990, the office has been able to restore many historic rooms and furniture, as required by election changes, and political pressures, and as permitted by monetary funds. Although the office has limited resources, no firm allocated budget, and must ensure short and long term projects, work so far has proven to be successful and to be well received by parliamentarians.

Plans for the Future

Ottawa

With the direction now set for the development of the Parliamentary Precinct, planning for a new committee room building is currently underway. A national design competition will be officially announced by the end of April 2002. Although the pertinent documents are currently confidential, some information is known.

The new building will have to respond to the West Block's architectural character and elements, since the site selected is close to the building. Architects will be asked to re-interpret the ideas of the Gothic Revival of the parliament buildings in a written submission before design proposals can be made. The idea of the "Canadian Gothic,"⁹⁷ as a type particular and symbolic of the country, is also one of the questions to be explored. This requirement clearly exemplifies the sense of national symbolism carried by the Gothic Revival and, for the first time since 1916, the desire to extend to a new building the architectural theme of Parliament Hill. This project holds the possibility of a renewed interest in the Gothic Revival and might influence the development of Canadian architecture, as the first buildings did more than one century ago.

One of the options studied for location, volume and massing, is shown in Figure 40. The new building is to be located on the site of the former Supreme Court of Canada building, which was demolished in 1955, after the Court moved to its current building, designed by Ernest Cormier (1885-1980) and completed in 1946.

⁹⁷The term has been used in R.H. Hubbard, "Canadian Gothic," Architectural Review (August 1954): 103-108, to describe the presence of the Gothic Revival in Canada, and the national symbolism attached to the style, through the parliament buildings, churches and institutional buildings.

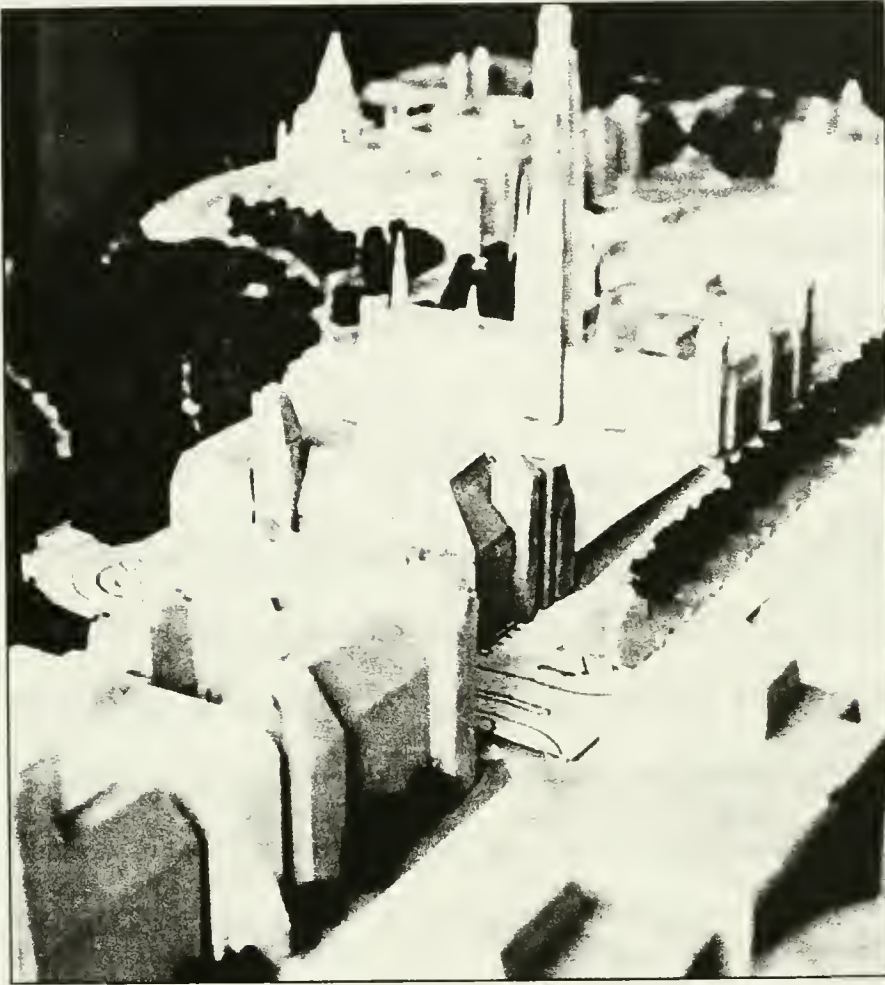


Fig. 40. Site Model for the Committee Rooms Building Options (building shown in brown). From Long-Term Architectural Planning Office, Ottawa.

In Figure 40, buildings of the Parliamentary Precinct are shown in light gray, and can be identified from left to right as: the Justice and Confederation Buildings in the foreground (shown with a white infill structure in between), and the West, Centre and

East Block in the background. The location is appropriate in terms of its proximity to other buildings and also its recollection of the former structure occupying the site. However, its massing could be overwhelming, as the site is of small proportions and the program requirements are extensive.

Work is currently underway for the restoration of the Library of Parliament, and more work is required in the near future for the West and Centre Block. The Centre Block project is currently being re-evaluated in term of work logistics. Renovation might take place all at once, instead of the previous plans for a two-phase work period. The Centre Block renovation project will be the largest, most demanding and sensitive project on Parliament Hill.

London

The Parliamentary Works Directorate established a 10-year rolling program in July 2001. The program sets out specific projects, each with an attached schedule and budget. Projects include maintenance, stone cleaning, data and video network improvements, and restorations. The program is impressive, not only because of its wide-ranging projects, but also because of the approvals it has already obtained to ensure budget allocation and timely project completion.

The work of the Directorate also extends to urban planning, since the activities of Parliament are not limited to Westminster. Recent planning work has developed a campus type of environment, where three city blocks will be interconnected. These include the Palace, Portcullis House and the building of Parliament Street. The recent work is meant to improve security and facilitate pedestrian circulation. There are also projects done in collaboration with other stakeholders, such as the World Squares for All Phase 1 Trafalgar Square.

Budapest

Long-term plans are dependent on political will and the assignment of budgets. Hungary is holding national elections during the second and third week of April 2002. The results might affect the work of the offices, should political changes occur.

While the Prime Minister's residence is being built in the Castle of Buda, his suite of offices might also be relocated. The newly restored study in the parliament building would serve the PM when the House is in session. Furthermore, the President's residence might also be relocated to the Castle, since it was the official residence until the Second World War. More planning is required however to work within the space limitation of the Castle. After the moves, the next project will be the restoration of the residential and offices suites presently occupied by the President of the Republic in the parliament building.

However, some long-term projects, such as the exterior masonry renovation, can be done according to plans since there will be no impacts on internal functions. Other work will be the small scale restoration of suites of offices when possible, and according to political changes.

New developments in preservation

In Canada, federal preservation policy is currently undergoing major changes that will affect how interventions to historic buildings are evaluated, and ultimately how conservation will be carried out on federally-designated buildings, including the buildings of parliament. These changes, promoted by the Historic Places Initiative program, were proposed in 1997 when the two-part program was established.

The first part addresses the creation of a national register of historic buildings, the development of the new Standard & Guidelines document to guide interventions, and a certification process for access to federal funds. The second part aims to provide a legislative base for the register and the enactment of the Standards & Guidelines, since preservation is currently sustained only by government policy, not law. This part is still under development and a bill is expected to be tabled in the House of Commons by the Minister of Canadian Heritage in June 2002.

The current system is based on the use of two documents: the Heritage Character Statements, available for each building that has received a designation, and the FHBRO Code of Practice, which is mostly based on the Venice Charter of 1964. Reviews of interventions are made using these documents, and the recommendations issued are sustained by government policy. The new Standards & Guidelines are based on the United States Secretary of the Interiors Standards for Rehabilitation. A pilot project is now underway and the document should be ready for implementation by September 2002. This new document is meant to provide users with information that is easier to find and aimed at more specific issues of preservation.

As the renovation program on Parliament Hill is only beginning, it is not yet clear how the new Standards and Guidelines will influence decisions about preservation and also how the force of law will affect building conservation. This could potentially have a tremendous impact on the authority of preservationists and the design flexibility permitted to architects and custodians. If it performs as expected, the new program will have a positive impact on the quality of preservation work, and will facilitate discussions between stakeholders.

CONCLUSION

One goal of this thesis was to identify and define the influence of the Gothic Revival movement and design precedents in the architectural history of each of these parliament buildings. Another was to analyze major changes in preservation responses since the buildings' construction to develop a critical view of current and future projects.

The Gothic Revival was adopted and adapted by each of the countries to express their own national style of architecture. Their choice was not only based on the Gothic Revival's dissemination but, more importantly, it was based on the flexibility and capacity of the Gothic Revival for development in various original modes. This makes it suitable for the representation of national values, hence providing a sense of national symbolism to each country.

The analysis of the development of the parliament buildings revealed that under similar circumstances, different preservation responses were selected. For example, the parliament at Budapest was faithfully reconstructed whereas the work on the of the House Chamber in London after the Second World War was a re-interpretation of the Gothic Revival. Differences can be explained by the political and cultural context, and by the preservation structures in place. Opportunities for preservation were sometimes missed, as was the case in the reconstruction of the Centre Block where, in a haste to rebuild, preservation options were not fully explored.

A consistent approach to preservation can be seen in Budapest, where restoration has taken precedence over other types of interventions on different occasions. In opposition, responses in Ottawa have explored practically all levels of intervention, ranging from interior demolition in the West Block to accurate restoration in the East Block.

Additions and new construction will be key to establishing a link with the past while introducing new forms. Portcullis House is a good example of integration of new design in a historic context and can serve as a reference for the future work, such as the new building planned for Parliament Hill.

One thing all three parliaments have in common is the recent preservation work performed by highly specialized teams. We can see in the example of London how a centralized, concerted approach to preservation can provide a comprehensive and consistent result. In Budapest, we can see how preservation challenges required creative thinking and good preservation work can be done in less than favorable conditions.

The recent preservation efforts in each parliament building will serve to ensure the legacy of the Civic Gothic. In Canada, the construction of a new building on Parliament Hill is expected to re-interpret the ideas of the Gothic Revival, and is set to revive the ideas and symbolism of the Canadian Gothic.

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